Mall Van Patten

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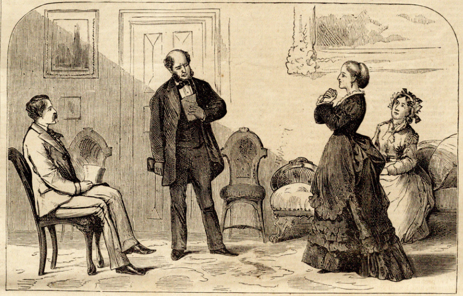

MR. JILSON READING "UNCLE TOMMY'S" LETTER TO MRS. HAWLEY.

THE COW-BOY'S SONG.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

Then, as we came out on the pasture swells,
In the last flash of sunset, rosy bright,
We heard the tinkling of the cattle bells,
And then, as one by one they drew in sight,—
Brindle and Sorrel, Switch and Broken Horn,
All homeward wending the dim vale along—
Upon the breeze in mellow sounds was borne
The simple accents of the cow-boy's song.

All day among the grasses sweet
I've herded ye, my sweet-breathed cows;
Now homeward hie with willing feet,
Ye cannot always feed and browse.
Gee up, Dobbin and Silky Tail,
Maud awaits with the milking pail.

All night the glistening dews will fall
On grass and ferns and cool green boughs;
To-morrow ye shall have them all,
So linger not, my bright-eyed cows.
Gee up, Dobbin and Silky Tail,
Maud awaits with the milking pail.

The harvest hands their suppers wait,
The farmer's wife impatient grows;
Upon the slopes we've lingered late,
Trip, trip along, my creamy cows.
Gee up, Dobbin and Silky Tail,
Maud awaits with the milking pail.

Ye all are tired, and I am too,
The hour is late, the twilight grows;
Maud, ye know, is my sweetheart true,
Hurry along, my lazy cows.
Gee up, Dobbin and Silky Tail,
Maud awaits with the milking pail.

The rude song feebly fell, but still we stood,
My love and I, upon the pasture swells,
Until it faded through the darkening wood,
Lost with the tinkling of the cattle bells.
And then, as slowly down the path we went
Back to the farm-house, in the pleasant vale,
Mingled with our own love, our talk was bent
On Maud, the cow-boy, and the milking pail.
We could but smile at the rude lover's haste,
In the last stanza of his song expressed,
And yet it lent a tenderness that graced
The day's departure down the glooming West

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The Plot Against Hawley;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," "MARK HEBER'S LUCK," ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

FISTY BANTAM: HIS IDEAS AND PROJECTS.

At the entrance of Fisty Bantam and his men into the secret grotto in which Will. Hawley and his friends had previously taken refuge, both Will. and Capt. Dougal shrank deeper into the shadows in which they were hidden, and the madman did likewise.

"Make yourselves comfortable, my lads," said Fisty Bantam, as he seated himself upon a projecting stone at one side of the main chamber of the grotto. "I have something to say to you—quite a speech, in fact, to make to your worships."

The forty-one runaway convicts—for every man of them was present—threw themselves upon the rocky floor of the grotto, in a variety of careless postures, and prepared to listen to their leader.

"You all knows me, my friends," he resumed, as soon as a general attention was accorded him. "My name may not be the one given me by my parents: I am not aware that I ever had any name in particular; 'tis morally presumable that my naming was left to the neighbors, or to strangers; and if I ever shone by my name chiefly, as shines my lords and ladies, the fact has escaped my recollection; but I have a good, square name nevertheless, and a pair of good, stout fists to support it. What's more to the point, I am your chosen leader, even as you are my chosen followers, and I intends to lead you on to fortune. In fact, I have led you to this island in quest of a fortune, as you shall soon hear."

"Note that!" breathed Dougal, in Will.'s ear. "This confirms what I told you about the buried treasure."

"They're here for 'a fortune,' eh?" chuckled the madman. "Ho, ho! Here's another man who has lost his wits! Here's another Jude Breeling! This island is certainly becoming the general hospital of all the Bedlamites in creation!"

Fisty Bantam took a drink of brandy from a pocket flask, and continued:

"Like yourselves, my gentle babies, I was sent into this world with a single happy qualification, talent, or what not—the knack of getting a living at somebody else's expense. Wherever I've been, and whatever has been my lot, I've never forgotten, in all my varying fortunes, that the world owes me a support, and that everything I sees around me is mine, provided I can get my ten fingers upon it to lift it, and a corresponding number of toes under it to carry it off. I never steals, and I'd scorn to borrer. I merely takes whatever belongs to me, wherever I finds it. By this system I avoid all disputes with strangers.

"I was a waterman in Lunnun not many generations ago, my amiable parishioners. That's as much as to say that I was a member of that ancient and honorable corporation, the Watermen of the Thames. If any man wants to go ashore from a ship lying in the Thames, 'tis the precious privilege of a waterman to carry him, and charge kim six prices for the service; and this regulation applies to everybody, even to the commanders of ships, who may have a dozen sailyers under their orders. In like manner, if any man desires to go from the shore to any ship in the stream, 'tis the waterman aforesaid who is chartered and consecrated to take him up and set him down. But the profession of the waterman of the Thames, my sweet pilgrims, is not of late years what it used to be: it has become too watery: you stands around all day sometimes without getting a drink of gin out of it: here, as in everything else, the cursed constables and policemen have spoiled everything; and hence I did not make enough on the Thames to permit me to buy everything lying upon the two sides of it. At that ill fortune I was mad. I continnered, therefore, to pick up such of my property as was not too carefully watched by others, and at length I picked up a trifle that another man wanted more than I did. The result of this little disagreement was that I botanized for Botany Bay.

"There were a few complications in my case, my docile bull-dogs, and my botanical studies were to end only after a long term of years. All this occurred before '40, of course. The government does not send us to Botany Bay since '40. The colonists won't have us—no, none of them, neither in East Australia, nor in South Australia, nor in Van Dieman's Land. They are too good for us, or we are too bad for them, which amounts to the same thing, in my way o' thinking.

"I've allus been a lover of fresh air and of out-door sports, my striped hearers, and you needn't bewail to hear that I couldn't stand the treatment I received from the government. Having emigrated from my native land, I naturally emigrated from Australia, and continued to emigrate and perigrinate, until all trace of me was lost in the great abysses of motion and circumlocution.

"At last, somewhere about '41, I found myself adrift in Hong Kong, in such a state of general ruin that my soul and body hung together only by the skin of my teeth. The 'prodigal son,' with his 'husks' regularly served, was a reveller in comparison. An American man-o'-war happening along, I enlisted as a first-class blockhead, or in some such capacity, and the next day found myself perched at mast-head, and on the look-out for the pirates who were then, as now, afflicting every foot of the East Indies.

"You all know, my cropped heads, what it is to be a sailyer. 'Tis to be a dog encased in a cold poultice, with a tin kettle appended, and to be everlastingly on the jump, to a grand chorus of *ki-yr!* To say that I was soon disgusted with the lot of a sailyer, is to talk watered milk; but I contents myself with that observation, for the reason that human speech as all too cold and meaningless to describe the sailyer's condition.

"That little cruise o' mine, however, had an advantage. I comes now to the fortune of which I've dropped some hints before and since leaving Australia!"

He took another drink from his flask, and then resumed, while Will. and Dougal, as well as the madman, redoubled their attention:

"After cruising a long time in the Indian Ocean, we finally fell in with a couple of British men-o'-war, who asked our help in running down a pirate. This pirate, it seems, had just captured the *Hornet*, an American Indiaman. Aboard of this *Hornet* had sailed, as passenger, a great merchant named Aymar, who had with him a big fortune of a million of dollars, or about two hundred thousand pounds, my royal pensioners. This fortune had been seized by the pirate, after Mr. Aymar and the rest escaped from the *Hornet* in their boats, and away had gone the pirate with all o' that money. Our American ship accordingly joined forces with the two Britishers, and away went all three o' them in pursuit of the pirate, who made for this island of Desolation. Here the pirates were suddenly attacked by the three cruisers, and here they were all killed, after a long and savage hunt that lasted about two days and nights.

"But the pirates had buried their million beforehand, and not a penny of it was found by the three cruisers. It was *my* lot, however, to get track of the great merchant's money. It happened in this way, my ferocious disciples: Toward the last of the fight, when I, as a good American sailyer, was chasing the wicked pirates, sword in hand, I came across a pirate who had been shot through the body and left for dead—and who was, in fact, dying. He proved to be an old acquaintance—a man I had met in Hong Kong, and with whom, while lounging upon the docks, I had become quite intimate. We knew each other at a glance, and as there had allus been the best o' feeling between us, why, he told me, after a few remarks, just where the money was buried and all about it, and then dropped off dead as suddenly as an ant drops off from a tree when you touch it with your finger."

A great sensation followed this announcement, not only on the part of the runaway convicts, but also on the part of Will. and his friends.

"And you have known, all these ten years past, where that million o' dollars is buried?" cried one of Bantam's followers excitedly.

"I have, my gay zebra—"

"And you've never been here to get it?" continued the excited follower.

"Never, Mr. Dickory Dock," explained Bantam, "for the simple reason that I 'owed the State some service,' to borrer an idea from the sweet bard of Avon, and the State insisted upon my paying up. In other words, the American ship-o'-war aboard of which I was a sailyer fetched up in Australia before I had a chance to leave her. I was bound to leave her, of course, the minute she touched land, and leave her I did, although I was well aware of the risk I was running."

"And you was recognized—nabbed—"

"You describe my misfortune, Dickory, as well as if you had witnessed it. I was not only nabbed, but I was held in such close custody that it was years before I got my leg out o' the irons, and still other years before I could carry that leg out o' doors. But time, which occasionally changes things, at last gave me a chance to recover my lost liberty, and at the same time knock my employer on the head, and I availed myself of the occasion to do justice to both of those great interests.

"This happy change in my lot took place about a year ago, my trembling sinners, and you all know the project I have been carrying on since that joyous deliverance. I have been gathering you as so many vultures to a feast. The first point of our little conspiracy was to leave Australia—to escape, to vanish, to disappear at once and for ever. This first point was duly accomplished by seizing the *Dower*, and in sailing to this island. The next thing in course is for us to dig up that buried million!"

"It may have been dug up already, in the course of all these years, while you have been a prisoner in Australia," said the follower who had before spoken, and who, it appears, rejoiced in the soubriquet of "Dickory Dock."

Fisty Bantam shook his head.

"I won't say the thing's impossible," he responded. "It's enough to say that there's not the least likelihood of it. The pirates were all killed, and it is not likely that any of them had either time or inclination to reveal their secret to any of their pursuers. It was only because my dying pirate recognized me as an old friend that he told me of the treasure. No, no—the secret was not given to another; 'tis mine alone!"

"Let us hope so," said Dickory Dock. "And if you share Mr. Aymar's buried million with us, we shall all have enough for a holiday."

"Share it with you I shall, my noble kangaroos," said Bantam, "and why shouldn't I? I have the greatest need of your services. Every man is my enemy—every foot of the earth is hostile. How long are we certain of living? The man-of-war we left at Perth may arrive at this island before noon—and this, by the way, is the reason why I had the *Dower* burned last night."

"That was a good bonfire," said Dickory. "It rid us of Dougal. How I hated him!"

"How we all hated him!" said Bantam. "He cost us several of our best zebras, and his evidence would have hanged every one of us, in case of his living to give it. And now for another point. You need not worry about the loss of the *Dower*, and about the condition of our boats, provisions, or what not. The only thing we have to fear is the arrival of a man-of-war, and we are too many and too well armed to tremble a great deal at even the advent of a cruiser. It's my intention to keep out of sight, however, and to play spider. The island is supposed to be uninhabited, and we will take good care not to destroy this pleasing supposition. In this way, the first vessel that calls here for water or for cabbages is ours, my animated sawbucks, if we should wish to seize her."

"Bravo!" cried Dickory Dock. "And when, if you please, shall we have the pleasure, most precious commander, of assisting you to unearth that million?"

"Just as soon as there is the least prospect of our being able to get away from this island with it," declared Bantam. "I will not fail to notify you all before the digging commences. In the mean time I have brought you to this curious grotto for a purpose. I stumbled upon this place when I was in chase of the pirates aforesaid, some ten good years ago. And I wish to recommend this place to you as a residence, and especially as a general rendezvous in case of our receiving a visit from a man-of-war. I am sorry, of course, that we lost the *Dower*. It was my intention to stow her in Cumberland harbor, or still further south, in some shady nook where no man or ship will put in an appearance for the next hundred years, and in case of our doing so, we should have had fine quarters aboard of her. But we can be comfortable here, at the same time that we are securely hidden. We have only to hide our boats in the neighboring inlet, post our look-outs, and commence living. And this, my savory pippins, is about all I have to say to you at present. I have other things to communicate in due time—things concerning our future—but here endeth, as the parsons say, our present lesson."

A general buzz of satisfaction and approval succeeded, as Bantam arose to his feet, with a sweeping movement of his right arm around him.

"Note what a vast house is here placed at your disposal!" he exclaimed admiringly. "And the most curious fact concerning this grotto is, that it has another outlet than that by which we entered, an outlet which gives upon the sea, but which is perfectly invisible from that quarter. I will show you all this secret passage. This way, all!"

And Fisty Bantam led the way directly into the narrow crevice in which the madman had taken refuge.

The madman essayed to retire before the advance, but he was startled and dazed, and soon lost his footing, tumbling headlong at the feet of Fisty Bantam, and making noise enough with his useless old cutlass to have waked an army of sleepers.

"Halloo! what is here?" cried Bantam fiercely.

The madman recovered his footing, and confronted the advancing horde, with a foolish grin upon his visage, as he exclaimed:

"Who *should* I be? Who is chief in St. Helena? Ho, ho!"

CHAPTER XX.

A STARTLING LIGHT ON THE HORIZON.

It is an easy thing to plan a piece of villainy, as we have seen Pedder and his sister doing, but its execution is another matter altogether.

The execution seldom responds to the conception, and Pedder and his sister were fated to furnish a notable example of the difference between a plot in theory and a plot in practice.

True, they had taken a fair start; separated husband and wife; caused Mrs. Hawley to suppose her husband dead; inflicted deep misery upon two loving hearts; and Miss Pedder had even undertaken the long voyage to Desolation, with the intention of telling Hawley that his wife was dead, and with the fixed purpose of wooing him so cunningly, so persistently, that he would eventually offer her marriage.

But not the least benefit had yet accrued to either of the plotters; not the least advance had Capt. Pedder made in his designs upon Mrs. Hawley; not the least assurance had the brother and sister received of their eventual success; not the least peace or reward had either of them found in all their wicked labors.

And already had a merciful and beneficent Providence prepared for the plotters a blow which was destined to make their wicked plot totter upon its foundations.

Let us now narrate how this blow fell upon them.

Mrs. Hawley was seated by one of the windows of her little parlor. The window was open, and the breezes of the warm summer afternoon were entering and playing around her. Her baby was asleep in the adjoining bedroom, and thither the eyes of the young mother were turned every few minutes, in the pauses of the conversation she was carrying on with Mrs. Piper, who sat near her.

"I have not yet decided what I shall do for a living," Mrs. Hawley was saying, by way of concluding the matter which had been under discussion, "but it is evident that I must do something. If I should remain idle, the interest of my twenty-five hundred dollars would not support me, and I should soon be devouring my principal, and by the time baby is five or six years old principal and interest would end together. I must either accept your kind offer, and take an interest with you in this house, using my money for the new furniture, and so forth, or else I must buy out some little millinery business or a thread and needle store. Certain it is that I must soon be doing something for baby's future, now that his poor papa is gone from us forever."

"Quite right, dear. I will assist you in every way I can, whatever you may decide upon. But I do hope you will decide to take an interest with me. I do not believe you can do better."

The response of Mrs. Hawley—if she intended to make any—was interrupted by the entrance, after a preliminary knock, of Jenny, who, as usual, bore between her thumb and fore-finger a card, which she handed to Mrs. Hawley.

"Mr. Henry Jilson, with Duncan, Sherman & Co., bankers," read the young mother aloud, with a sudden pallor and a visible tremor. "Since that awful day on which Mr. Moody came here, to announce my husband's death to me, I have not been able to look upon one of these strange cards without all this emotion. The sight of a card from a stranger gives me a shock."

"You do not know this Mr. Jilson, then?" asked Mrs. Piper.

"Not in the slightest degree. I will see him, however. I will see everybody that calls hereafter, except Captain Pedder. Tell the gentleman, Jenny, that I shall be down in a moment."

The girl withdrew.

"There's nothing more to pain me," murmured Mrs. Hawley, as she arose and shook out her dark skirt and bestowed a few swift touches upon her hair. "Yet this call makes me tremble all over! To see this Mr. Jilson is as disagreeable as to step into a bath of ice-cold water."

"You are nervous, dear. If you like, I will go down with you."

"Thank you. Come."

Mrs. Piper paassed her arm through the young mother's, and they descended the stairs together.

Jenny met them in the hall.

"I forgot to tell you, Mrs. Hawley, that the gentleman has a friend with him."

"Oh, very well."

As the ladies entered the parlor, the two gentlemen arose and advanced, with bows of such marked respect, and especially to Mrs. Hawley, that they were both greatly astonished.

"My card will have told you who I am," said the elder gentleman, with another profound bow, as he drew near to Mrs. Hawley, whose identity was perfectly indicated by her mourning robes. "I am Jilson, of Duncan and Sherman's. My friend here is Mr. Wilber, a clerk in the general post-office."

Repeated salutations were exchanged, and Mr. Jilson drew a formidable looking pocket-book from his breast pocket.

"I have a letter here for you, Mrs. Hawley," he continued, with that clear, rapid directness of manner and speech characteristic of his profession; "but before I deliver it—before you even see it—I must ask you a few questions, in accordance with very clear and precise instructions our house has received from a leading banking house of Calcutta."

"*Calcutta!*" repeated Mrs. Hawley, and every drop of blood seemed to recede from her features.

"Sit down, Madam, I beg," said Mr. Jilson, placing a chair for her with a quick and graceful movement.

Mrs. Hawley complied.

"Your late husband's name was William, I believe?" resumed the banker's clerk.

Mrs. Hawley nodded dumbly, unable to speak.

"It was!" said Mrs. Piper emphatically.

"Thanks. And your father, Mrs. Hawley, was the late Carmichael Aymar?"

"Oh, he was!"

"Your Christian name was Clara?"

"Yes, sir."

"These formal questions thus asked and answered," said Mr. Jilson smilingly, as he opened his vast pocket-book and drew out a letter, "I am now authorized to inform you, Mrs. Hawley, that I have the pleasure of bringing and delivering to you a letter from your uncle, Thomas Aymar of Calcutta."

Everything seemed to reel around Mrs. Hawley. Her sight was blinded with tears, as she received the letter in question from the hands of Mr. Jilson and hastily tore it open.

"We will wait, Madam, until you have read the letter," said Mr. Jilson, resuming his seat. "We have certain further communications to make, which will come more properly after you have taken cognizance of the contents of your uncle's letter."

"From 'Uncle Tommy' at last!" murmured Mrs. Hawley, pressing her lips to the missive. "I know that there are good news within for me. I knew it the moment, Mr. Jilson, you uttered the word Calcutta. Everything is a blur before my eyes—I am so surprised and happy. Please read the letter for me, Mr. Jilson."

Mr. Jilson hastened to do so.

The letter was an exact copy of the one Capt. Pedder had intercepted at the general post-office, and had so ruthlessly destroyed, some two weeks previous. Its contents are accordingly known to our readers.

The reading was interrupted repeatedly by the exclamations of Mrs. Hawley, and toward its conclusion, as the kind greetings of "Uncle Tommy" fell upon her hearing, she could not restrain a shower of grateful and joyous tears.

"Oh! he lives! my dear uncle!" she murmured. "He is coming home. He was to start about the middle of February—"

"And he ought to be here already," said Mr. Jilson. "This letter reached us three weeks since. There is a postscript, which I beg to read."

This postscript was as follows:

"P. S. I have sent the original of this letter through the general post-office, but send you this copy through my bankers, with instructions for them to take active measures to find you. And as the voyage upon which I am about to embark has its risks, I have taken the precaution to have my bankers in Calcutta open a credit for you at Messrs. Duncan, Sherman & Co.'s of New York, for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars.

"T. A."

Mrs. Piper, in her excitement, had remained standing until this moment, but she now dropped into a chair as heavily as if life had departed.

"One hundred thousand dollars!" she gasped wildly. "That blessed 'Uncle Tommy!' But I always knew that things would turn out this way. I even said so—in substance!"

"As indicated in this postscript," said Mr. Jilson, with his usual business calmness, "our house is ready at any moment from this time forward to pay over to you, Mrs. Hawley, any or all of the sum of money herein mentioned, namely, one hundred thousand dollars."

The burning flush of joy these words called to Mrs. Hawley's face was as marked as had been her previous paleness.

"And I venture to add upon my own account, Mrs. Hawley," said Mr. Jilson, with another of his very polite bows, "that if you will do me the honor of inquiring for me, when you come to our house on business, I shall be most happy to extend to you that special attention and consideration our correspondent at Calcutta has so earnestly impressed upon us."

"Thanks, Mr. Jilson—many thanks," said Mrs. Hawley, smiling through her tears. "I shall remember you, with great pleasure. I thank you especially for bringing me such glorious news!"

"I regret that you did not have them sooner," said Mr. Jilson; "but we have had considerable trouble to find you. Your uncle supposed you to be in New York, and that was all the light he could give us. Your maiden name was in the Directory, but you had moved. None of the Hawleys we visited knew anything of your whereabouts. All this search has taken time. The letter sent by Mr. Aymar to the general post-office has served us in our painful dilemma. It put us upon your track."

"In what way, please?"

"Why, in the first place, the letter was advertised—"

"It was?"

"Yes, Madam, it was. The fact did not come to your notice?"

"No, sir. The truth is, I have had little correspondence lately, and I have not been at all well since the news came of my husband's death. The fact of the letter's being advertised has therefore naturally escaped my notice."

"I see, Madam. But it did not escape ours. We accordingly sent a messenger promptly to the post-office, not for the letter itself, but to make an arrangement for ascertaining your address; but we were too late."

"Too late, sir?"

"The letter had been gone several hours."

"Gone, sir!"

"The clerk in charge of that particular delivery informed our messenger that you had sent for your letter."

"Sent for it, Mr. Jilson? I have never sent for it. Never until this hour have I known of the letter's existence!"

"My friend here, Mr. Wilber, and myself," said Jilson,—"had already come to this conclusion. I am relating now what was told us. The clerk informed us, therefore, that you had sent for your letter, and in proof of the fact, exhibited to us a written order for the letter—an order purporting to come from you, for it was signed 'Mrs. William Hawley.'"

"This is astounding," returned Mrs. Hawley. "As I did not even know of the letter's existence, I could not give any person an order for it. The order in question was forged, sir. Who can have been guilty of this crime?"

"We do not know who forged the order, Mrs. Hawley," said Jilson, with the vibrating voice of sympathizing satisfaction, "but we *do* know who presented it."

"You do? Thank God for that! You are putting me on the track of a great piece of iniquity. Who presented this forged order at the post-office?"

"You will be surprised to hear the name, doubtless. The bearer of the forged order was Capt. Luke Pedder!"

"Pedder? No! Impossible!" exclaimed Mrs. Hawley, arising to her feet, and then sinking back into her chair.

"There must be some mistake," protested Mrs. Piper.

"Not the least, ladies," said Mr. Wilber, advancing a couple of steps. "Mr. Jilson has already informed you that I am a clerk in the post-office. The evidence I shall give you, Mrs. Hawley, in this case, is therefore of the most direct and explicit character. Upon the morning when the letter from your uncle was advertised, I was at my post promptly, my post being the particular delivery to which Mr. Jilson has alluded. I had not been on duty a great while when your letter was called for. I looked out and recognized Captain Pedder. He did not know *me*, of course, but I knew *him*—"

"Knew him, beyond all doubt, Mr. Wilber?" murmured Mrs. Hawley.

"Yes, Madam, I knew him beyond all doubt, and for this reason: My father has been in poor health a long time, and a couple of years since he made a voyage to Australia in the *Flying Childers*, and I had occasion to see Captain Pedder repeatedly. I saw him first at the office of his owners, Minnell & Co., in South street, and afterward on shipboard—"

"I comprehend," murmured Mrs. Hawley, with feverish impatience. "You were perfectly sure, then, of the identity of Pedder with the man calling for my letter?"

"Perfectly; and it is needless to add that I hadn't the least suspicion of anything wrong. A regulation having been made, however, that rendered an order necessary in the circumstances, I informed Captain Pedder of the fact, whereupon he drew an order from his pocket and handed it over, remarking that he was aware of the new regulation, and had come prepared to conform to it."

"And you have the order in question?"

"Here it is, Madam."

Mr. Wilber placed the order in her hands, and she gazed at it with blended curiosity and horror.

"How like to my 'Hawley' is that of this signature!" she murmured. "I could almost think that I wrote it."

"But you are perfectly sure that you never saw this order before?" demanded Mr. Wilber. "I ask the question rather as a formality than for information."

"Then I formally declare that I never saw this order until now, and that the signature is neither mine nor in any way authorized by me," said Mrs. Hawley energetically. "And, what is equally pertinent, gentlemen, I solemnly declare that I have never seen the letter Captain Pedder obtained from the post-office."

"As I supposed," said Mr. Wilber. "By your leave, Madam, I will take charge of the forged order again, so as to have it ready for use, for it's certain that our enterprising commander has not seen the last of it. We don't always catch this sort of offender, but when we do, we deal with him as severely as possible."

Mrs. Hawley accordingly resigned into Mr. Wilber's hands the forged document.

"Of course," said Mr. Jilson, "this order did not afford any clue to your whereabouts, as the street and number are not given, and as the bearer was unknown. Pardon; I will explain. About an hour after Pedder obtained the letter, Mr. Wilber was relieved by another clerk, in pursuance of previous arrangements, and at once went up to a brother's, near the eastern end of Long Island, where he has been rusticating until to-day. The clerk in Mr. Wilber's place knew nothing of the matter, and it was not until his return, and his report of Pedder's agency in the matter, that we sent a messenger to South street, and so got trace of you. We did not find Pedder, but we found Mr. Minnell, and he at once informed us that you were living at Mrs. Piper's in Fourth street, as he well remembered, the sad case of Mr. Hawley having made a great impression upon him. And having learned that much, Mrs. Hawley, we had no further difficulty in finding you. At our second inquiry in Fourth street for Mrs. Piper's, we were directed to the very number, and in this way we have reached the conclusion—or perhaps I should say the beginning—of the very important trust your uncle has reposed in us."

"I thank you again, Mr. Jilson, and you, Mr. Wilber—thank you both heartily, gentlemen," said Mrs. Hawley, as her visitors arose to take their leave. "I shall be certain to see you again, if Heaven spares our lives, for the great services you have both rendered me shall be further acknowledged—"

"Oh, do not mention our services," protested Mr. Jilson.

"We are only too happy," declared Mr. Wilber emphatically.

"If you will permit me to make just one recommendation, Mrs. Hawley," said Mr. Jilson, with another low bow.

"Speak freely, sir."

"You have lately received a call from a young lady named Dail—Miss Alice J. Dail?"

"Yes, sir."

"I wish to say to you that she is a very worthy young lady, one in whose every word you can place every confidence. She is rather friendless at present, being an orphan, but her parents were very nice people, and her father a man of considerable prominence in his profession."

"You are acquainted with Miss Dail then?"

"No, Madam—not yet. I have never even met her. But she is receiving the attentions, I have just discovered, of my young friend here, Mr. Wilber—"

"Indeed!" murmured Mrs. Hawley.

"Such is the fact, Madam," said Mr. Wilber, with a blush that would have done credit to a young girl.

"And he has begged me to mention these facts concerning Miss Dail, for the reason that the young lady proposes to call upon you again soon—in fact, in the course of this very afternoon, does she not, Mr. Wilber?"

"She does, and probably within this hour."

Mrs. Hawley looked a little curious, a little puzzled, and possibly a little excited.

"Of course I shall be glad to see Miss Dail again," she said. "I should be glad to see her on your account, Mr. Wilber, if on no other."

"But the point I wish to mention particularly is this, Mrs. Hawley," said Mr. Jilson. "Miss Dail is worthy of the strictest belief in all she may say, whatever she may say to you. And when I remind you that she has been living with Captain Pedder and his sister during the past year, as she mentioned to you on the occasion of her former call, you may reasonably conclude, after the affair of this forged order, that Miss Dail can give you some valuable information."

There was something in the manner of the two gentlemen that struck Mrs. Hawley, and she would have gladly made a few inquiries, but both of them seemed suddenly to have finished all their business with her, and to be in a great hurry. She did not seek to detain them, therefore, and in another moment they had taken their departure, Mrs. Hawley attending them to the door.

"Such a tremble as they leave me in," murmured the young mother, as she sank into the nearest chair. "What did they mean by this talk of Miss Dail's information?"

"Heaven only knows, dear," returned Mrs. Piper, as she embraced her young friend almost hysterically, "and to Heaven's mercy we may leave all that the future has in store for us. But the present, Mrs. Hawley, how glorious it is! What a grand letter from 'Uncle Tommy!' How all is changed for you within the hour! No little 'millinery business' for you now. Not even an interest in my boarding-house. You have a hundred thousand dollars at your disposal, and an uncle hastening to you with a million! You know that I rejoice with you."

"Yes, yes," assented Mrs. Hawley, with joyous tears, as she returned the embrace of her tried and faithful friend. "But what a sting there is in all this, as I remember that my poor husband is not here to share all this good fortune!"

At this moment the girl Jenny descended the stairs, and Mrs. Hawley beckoned to her, saying:

"You remember, Jenny, the young lady who called a couple of weeks since—Miss Dail?"

"Oh, that young lady with the wild eyes? Shall I ever forget her?"

"I expect another call from Miss Dail this afternoon, and I wish you to show her up to my private parlor as soon as she comes."

"Yes, ma'am," said Jenny wonderingly.

Ascending slowly to her room, with Mrs. Piper's assistance, Mrs. Hawley spent the next half hour in discussing with her friend the exciting incidents which were entering into her life.

At the end of the period named Jenny made her appearance, with about as much mystery and excitement as she had exhibited on the occasion of Miss Dail's previous visit.

"If you please, ma'am, Miss Dail has come."

"Well, why didn't you show her up at once?"

"I thought I'd just warn you, ma'am. She looks like another woman. She isn't wild a bit, but so quiet—so self-possessed—so business-like—and yet so serious!"

Mrs. Hawley clasped her hand to her heart, with a sudden pallor.

"It's my turn to-day to be excited and nervous," she said. "I feel that—that this visit from Miss Dail means something. Show her up, Jenny."

The girl withdrew, but returned a moment later, ushering Miss Dail into Mrs. Hawley's presence.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A BRAND FROM THE BURNING.

A LIFE-SKETCH.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

I sat in Dr. Tobie's office. He had been reading a letter when I entered, and beyond a simple salutation nothing was said until he had folded the missive and laid it aside. His eyes were moist as he finished the perusal, and he wiped them with his handkerchief. Then he got up and shook me warmly by the hand, and after a few passages of friendly banter, he said to me:

"Sit down, old fellow: I've got a story for you." And he laid his hand upon the letter which he had been reading. "I won't bore you. It's a simple sketch, and the coloring you can put in for yourself."

I seated myself, and the Doctor told me as follows:

"Twelve years ago I was called to the Police Court to give my testimony concerning the result of a *post-mortem* of the body of a man who had been killed in a street brawl. This case having been disposed of, I took a seat within the bar to watch the wheel of justice revolve upon other cases. They came up from the prisoners' dock, one by one—the old, the middle-aged, and the young—representatives of all degrees of crime and degradation,—and I wondered, as I saw them passed off to punishment, how many of the poor creatures had been absolutely born to a life of shame; how many had been led thereto by surrounding circumstances and influences over which they had no control; and how many might have fallen from a better estate through criminal choice. At all events, I could not put away the conviction that *here* was a field for missionary effort. But never mind my moralizing. Only suffer me to say, that after I had mentally fired a shot at what I conceived to be misdirected missionary effort, the thought forced itself upon me,—'What have *I* done in the way of this redemption?' And I concluded that I had better wait until I had redeemed myself from *inaction* before I blamed others for misdirection of action.

"I had just passed this reproof upon myself when a prisoner stepped up from the dock who particularly attracted my attention. It was a boy, not more than fourteen years of age, and rather small at that. He was light of frame, and, I thought, slightly under-sized; but every inch of him was finely strung and firmly set, and his form was beauty itself. His face was thin and pale, and his features of a clear Grecian cut. I saw him first in profile, and as his wavy hair, of a sunny hue, straggling into ringlets here and there, swept back from his full brow, I thought I had never seen a more tempting study. When he turned his face toward me I saw a pair of large blue eyes, and found that the view thus obtained of his features was equally interesting with the other. His clothes were ragged, but not dirty, and there was no dirt upon his hands nor upon his face. This struck me forcibly, because most of those who had come up from the prison-cell had come bleared and grimed.

"He answered to the name of Dick Printle, and was up for petty larceny; and the officer who presented him said this was the third time he had been up for like offending. The Judge nodded grimly, for he himself recognized the lad as one who had before passed under his sentence. The boy could not plead innocence, for he had been caught in the very act of pilfering; and he acknowledged his guilt. The Judge's brow was black with judicial thunder; but he did not deem it worth while to vent much of it upon so insignificant an object.

"'So! This is the third time!' he said. The boy started and trembled, and I thought he tried to speak; but the awful voice of power sounded again,—'You'll come to the gallows, sir!—do you know that? You are incorrigible! Haven't you had enough of prison life yet?'

"The boy's trembling ceased, and he looked defiant. He stood erect, his blue eyes flashed, and his finely cut nostrils were distended.

"By this time I had called to mind where and when, on a former occasion, I had seen that same boy. I had been called to his mother's death-bed three years before. I remembered the name—Printle—and I remembered the curly-headed boy who had held her failing hand. And I remembered that I had then heard the dying woman's story. Her husband had once been captain of a ship, and accounted a seaman of the very first class; but rum had broken him down, and cast him, a complete wreck, upon a dark shore. She had suffered more than she could tell,—had sunk to the sorrowful level where I had found her—and was only too glad to die. And, dying, she had left her boy the inmate of a den of criminals; and, in her obliviousness of spirit consequent upon a long suffering wherein only these children of night had been her friends, she looked thankfully upon the keeper of the den when he promised to be a friend to the boy.

"I thought of all this while the prisoner stood at the bar, and before the sentence had been pronounced I stepped over and touched the clerk of the court upon the arm, and told him that I would like to have that boy placed in my charge for a month. The clerk whispered to the judge, and the judge beckoned to me. I went to him, and he told me that he feared it would be of no use. 'The little rascal is utterly incorrigible,' said he. 'This is the third time within the year that he has been up for stealing.'

"I looked at the little fellow, and as I marked the finely cut lines of the handsome face, now so defiantly set, I thought to myself that if he were suffered to grow up into a manhood of crime he would give society trouble. He would play no second part in the drama of life, were it to be fair or foul. And I whispered to the judge my thoughts. He had been a class-mate of mine in college, and was willing to please me; and the sentence which, a few moments before, had waited upon his lips, was suspended, and the boy was placed under bonds in the sum of fifty dollars—which bond required that he should appear again in court at the expiration of one month. It was not my purpose to bail him out at that time, and the little fellow seemed slightly bewildered when the officer sent him back into the dock; and he may have been more bewildered still when he found himself consigned to the jail instead of being sent to the penitentiary.

"On the following day I went down to the jail, with an order from the sheriff, and was admitted to the boy's cell. His face brightened when he saw me, and in that instant I saw, as by inspiration, the latent goodness of the poor waif. I sat down, and called him by name, and asked him if he remembered me.

"He remembered me very well as the doctor who had been called to his mother's dying-bed.

"'Well,' said I, 'I would have helped your mother then had it been in my power; and I have come now to help you if you will let me.'

"He caught my hand, and looked up into my face; and he asked me what I meant. 'Of course,' said he, 'I will let you help me.'

"'But,' said I, 'will *you* help *me*?'

"He looked at me again in the same wondering way.

"'Will you help me to help you?' I asked.

"He caught my meaning. 'O!' he cried, 'will you give me a chance?'

"I told him that was what I had come for.

"'I have never had a chance,' he said. 'Ever since I can remember I have been down in the mud and the dirt, and those that wear fine clothes have shunned me; the officers have kicked me; and only thieves and pick-pockets have been good to me. O, if I could only have a chance!'

"'You have been punished for doing wrong?' I queried.

"'Yes, sir,' he said. 'I was sent to the penitentiary.'

"'But it didn't seem to do you any good.'

"'How could it?' he asked, with utter simplicity. 'I was treated like a little wretch while I was there, and when I came out I was kicked back into the old path. What chance was there for me to be better? Give me a chance, and see.'

"After talking with the boy a while, and satisfying myself that his very soul yearned for a better life, I told him to make himself comfortable and contented where he was until he saw me again. I made him understand that if he came out he must come upon my responsibility, and that I only wanted time to find a suitable starting-point for him in the new sphere. There was no wild burst of thanks,—no gushing of sentiment or promise. He took both my hands, and looked up with a solemn, earnest look, and with a tear starting from either eye, he said,—

"'Give me a chance, Doctor—a chance where I can hold my own with honest people—and if I fail you I will never ask help again.'

"I promised that I would try, and then I left him.

"I had a dear friend living away in the country—a true Christian man, who had a true Christian wife—a couple who preached their Christianity by *living* it, and who prayed with strong hands and tender hearts. I wrote to my friend, and told him the whole story, and he wrote back for me to send the boy to him. Then I went down to the jail, and when Dick looked up into my face, he clasped his hands over his eyes and broke out into sobbing and weeping. My first thought was to comfort him with assurance of coming good; but he stopped me.

"'I know! I know!' he cried. 'I see it in your face. I saw you smile, and I knew you had come to help me. O! I never, never saw that smile before.'

"On that day I took Dick Printle from the jail, and carried him to my own house, where I gave him new clothes, and where my wife and daughters were kind to him. On the day following, as I needed recreation, I went with him into the country, and introduced him to my friend, where he was at once taken to a comfortable home, and to tender, loving hearts.

"That was twelve years ago. To-day the waif which I rescued from the maelstrom of vice—the brand which I plucked from the burning—is an ornament to the society in which he moves, and that society is of the very best. He says it was from reverence of me that the idea came to him of being a physician; but no matter whence came the thought, the medical profession gained a grand accession when he received his diploma, and suffering humanity gained a true and able helper. He found a wife in the daughter of the man to whose care I consigned him; and he has found friends everywhere. In this letter he tells me that a second child has been born to him,—the first was a girl,—this is a boy,—and he asks me if he may give it my name; and asks further, that I will bring him my answer in person.

"'Come,' he writes, 'and take a peep into the heaven we owe to you. Come and make our heaven brighter still by the presence of one whom we love so deeply and so devotedly. Come—'

"But never mind the rest. It was only meant for my eye."

"And you will go?" said I.

"Yes," said the doctor. "It always does me good to see that man. My heart warms beneath his cheerful smile, and my faith in humanity gains new strength from the grandeur of his later life."

HOW IT CAME ABOUT.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

It made a very pretty picture—the big sandy-floored kitchen, with the branches of the cherry-trees against the fair windows, that were shaded inside by starched white dimity curtains. Bright scoured tins hung on one side the wall, and directly under these shining rows stood the huge white-wood table, that had been scrubbed till it was white almost as the curtains. A large dough tray, partly filled with sieved flour, stood at one end; a half dozen deep, yellow pie plates were ranged along, and the genius of the realm stood daintily by—pretty Millie Dale.

I say she was "pretty," with her short bare arms, dimpled at the elbows; her round white hands flying through the flour; her trim, well-shaped figure, in its brown calico dress, big gingham apron, and narrow white collar; her daintily poised head, with its mass of neatly arranged braids of nut-brown hair; her fine dark complexion, with its cherry-red lips and pink-tinged cheeks, and her roguish, merry eyes, as brown as a berry, whose white lids just now were cast demurely down, as she dexterously mixed her flaky crust.

"You are going to answer me, Millie, ar'n't you? It's hardly fair to keep a fellow in such awful suspense."

Theo Lynde was sitting at the furthest end of the table, with his eyes fixed intently on Millie's face; and Millie, pretending not to understand, raised her face so innocently.

"Really, Theo, you must pardon me. I forgot you asked me what time—"

"Nonsense, Millie!" and his loud voice rang hers down. "You incorrigible coquette you, why don't you say 'Yes' or 'No' when I ask you to marry me?"

"Oh, so you did! But I forgot all about it."

He bit his mustache vexedly. How ought he to woo this shy, charming girl, who utterly ignored all his tender speeches, who blushed when he accidentally caught her eye?

"You forgot it!" he returned bitterly. "Do you ever remember anything but the receipt for pie crust and Charlotte de Russe? Millie Dale, you shall not trifle with me a moment longer. Millie, tell me now—*do* you love me or not? You *know* how I love you!"

Then he paused to wait for an answer, his fine eyes very earnest, his heart just a little cowardly for fear she might refuse him. And Millie deliberately measured out another cup of flour, and took up a morsel of salt.

"Well, Theo, since you are determined—No!"

"No!" he echoed, in a voice thick with pain, and sprang to his feet as if the surprise hurt him.

"I said No," she returned coolly, "but I am sure there are other girls who *can* remember other things than to make Charlottes and pie crust, that will be overwhelmed with the honor you would do me. Dear, how hot the kitchen is!"

And Theo Lynde thought the sudden heat of the kitchen made her cheeks flame so beautifully; and, dispirited and sick-hearted, he left her to her cherry pies, and went down to the shady lakelet to nurse his disappointment.

"Them's first-rate pies, any how, Millie; you'll make 'em equal to your mother pretty soon. Mr. Lynde, them's fine pies, eh?"

Farmer Dale's cheery voice went ringing through the kitchen; and Mr. Lynde, in his white linen suit, glanced indifferently from a plate of rice pudding he was discussing.

"Cherry pie, did you say? No, I don't care for cherry pie particularly."

Millie looked up suddenly, and across at Theo. It sounded so strangely to hear him speak so, for he was so used to eating with special relish whatever she had made, and then sending little telegraphic glances of appreciation to her.

"You don't, eh?" said Farmer Dale, good-naturedly. "That's a pity, for Millie tells me she intends taking a lot to the picnic. You'll have to make some o' Mr. Lynde's favorite Charlotte Rushes, Millie, for his basket."

Millie's cheeks crimsoned, and Mr. Lynde's voice sounded *so* malicious, as he answered:

"You are very kind, Mr. Dale, but Miss Millie need not be put to so much trouble. I shall not be able to attend the picnic on Tuesday week, as I have decided to return to the city on Saturday night. My summering has been very delightful, Mr. Dale, and now comes the hard work."

So he was going away. Theo Lynde leave the Dale Farm! Why, what a wretched place it would be after that; so lonesome and—and— Then Millie's eyes dimmed suspiciously, and several big tears splashed on her white ruffled apron, while she looked quickly around to see if any one detected the weakness she was ashamed of.

Then she saw something that dried her tears as if a magic wand had touched them. She smoothed her apron fiercely, and her cheeks flamed as she saw, leisurely promenading to and fro under the trees on the lakelet's edge, and in full view of the window, Theo Lynde, with a stylishly dressed young girl on his arm; one of the boarders up at the hotel, she knew at a glance; and that, too, after all Theo had said about disliking such frivolous young ladies, and giving it as one reason for coaxing Farmer Dale's wife to take him as a boarder.

Well, Millie thought it was all over with them now. What a big fool he had been not to see she never meant what she said, last baking morning. Any how—and she caught her breath very like a sob—Theo Lynde was the only lover she ever cared a jot for; and he had turned right around from her and begun to court another girl!

Up and down, up and down they walked; and Millie sat and watched them through a perfect tempest of emotion, first of jealous anger, then jealous love, then outraged love, then wounded affection and regret; and when it fairly came to that, Millie's heart grew sick, and the angry pride fled from her eyes before the surging tears, and she moved away from the window where she could not see him.

What was she to do to cure this heart-ache? What *could* she do? How, if she dared do anything, ought she to go about it?

Those were the questions Millie Dale asked herself these June days, after she had foolishly done what a good many other girls have done before her—wantonly coquetted with their happiness. And she answered her self-imposed question so correctly, and acted so womanly, that I offer her behavior to many another young girl in the same predicament, as worthy of imitation.

The days went on, very wearily to Millie, until the Saturday when Mr. Lynde was to go away. His trunks were packed, and one of them Millie knew was full of daintily frilled and ruffled shirts, snowiest white vests, linen suits, that she herself had washed, starched and ironed. And then, when she dared delay no longer, Millie went into the darkened parlor where Mr. Theo Lynde was reading, while he waited for Farmer Dale's wagon to come around, that was to carry him to the train.

She went in, with a deliberate, slow step, her eyes glowing brightly and her cheeks robbed of their bloom.

"Mr. Lynde!"

He started up, bowed, and said:

"You are very kind to come wish me good-bye, Millie."

Perfectly free and friendly he was, but somehow there was such a barrier between them.

Then she raised her face freely to his.

"Not to say 'good-bye,' Theo; to beg you to forgive and forget what I said the other day. I did wrong, and whether you want to have me tell you so or no, I must do it."

Gradually the pink tinge in her cheeks darkened to scarlet; yet there she stood, the beautiful penitent, waiting for her verdict. A moment's silence, and then she felt Theo's kisses on her mouth, and Theo's arms about her.

"Millie! I have been *so* wretched, and now you make me forever happy! My brave, beautiful darling!"

Perhaps afterward she may have explained how it all came about.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A Boston merchant having advertised for a porter, was called on the next day by a stalwart Yankee, who said, "I say, boss, be you the man what advertised for a porter?" "Yes," sternly replied the merchant, "and I expressly stated that all applications must be made by mail." "Jes' so, boss," responded the Yankee, "an' ef I an't a male I'd be obleeged ef you'd tell me *what* I am!" He got the situation.

A New Hampshire paper says, "A man from London Centre started last Friday with a load of hay for Concord. His wife advised him not to smoke his pipe on the way, but he laughed at her. Pretty soon he came back with most of his clothes gone, his hair and eyebrows singed, and the iron work of his cart in a bag, upon his shoulder. Then his wife laughed."

A fop on his travels on the plains beyond the Mississippi complained that he was afflicted with dandruff, and would like a remedy for it. "The Sioux will fix that for you, young man," said an old trapper; "they have a cure that is sure as death." "What is it?" asked the fop. "Scalping," was the reply.

"Do you know," asked an old farmer of a politician, "the difference between yourself and my old specked hen?" The politician gave it up. "Well," said the old farmer, "the difference is this: *she* never cackles till she's laid her egg, and you are cackling all the time without ever laying any eggs at all."

A waggish farmer in Ohio killed forty black-snakes one day recently, and buried them in a sand pit. The next day he sent his hired man—a Swede—to dig fish worms in the same place, and the size of the worms frightening the poor fellow nearly out of his senses, he fled in terror from the scene.

A man bitten by a dog declared that he would kill the animal. "But the dog isn't mad," said the owner. "An't *mad!*" thundered the exasperated victim; "what's *he* got to be mad about, I'd like to know? *I'm* the one that's entitled to be mad in this business."

An Iowan, going to a friend to get him to write a notice of his wife's desertion, the latter wrote, "My wife having left my bed and board—" when the husband exclaimed, "Stop! stop! There's the trouble. She didn't leave my bed, but took it with her!"

"My boy is not unruly!" indignantly exclaimed a mother, whose son had been accused of unruly conduct by his teacher—"he is a good boy, but I admit that he's often troubled with a rush of temper to the brain."

At a recent fair, a set of Cooper's works was promised to the author of the best conundrum. A conspicuous dandy was declared the winner, and received a set of wooden pails made by the village cooper.

An Indiana town has the following dog ordinance: "Dogs that are not collared and labelled, no matter how respectably connected, will have their narratives amputated one inch south of their ears."

A little girl was tenderly nursing her sick doll, the other day, and on her mother's asking what ailed it, she replied, "It's got the Alabama *clams* very bad."

A school committee in Kansas having advertised for "a smart teacher," a man named Mustard applied for the situation and was accepted.

"That was a clear case of sue and cide," said a man, speaking of an elopement. "How so?" was the question. "Why, he sued, and she sighed."

An alderman of a city in Maine, being invited to attend a *centennial* jubilee, replied, "I can't attend this one, but I'll go next time."

The Penitentiary convicts in an Eastern State have been sentenced to a course of lectures on moral science.

When people are sea-sick the thing which they most ardently desire is to feel sea-cure.

There is a species of lion which no one is afraid of, and that is the dandy-lion.

It is said that Pittsburgh is a city that soots everybody who visits it.

There is one thing which can always be found, and that is fault.

The most irredeemable bonds as yet known are vagabonds.

The key which is the hardest to turn is the donkey.

CURRENT ITEMS.

The proprietor of a menagerie in Illinois attempted to make a rhinoceros perform in the ring, but the unicorn asserted his freedom, killed two men, knocked down eleven sections of seats, broke the centre pole of the tent, and let the canvas down upon such of the spectators as had not escaped, and then rushed into the street and into an unoccupied building, where he was secured and re-caged. Total cash damage, $3,000.

A farmer driving into Amherst with a load of hay, fell off it to the ground, struck on his head, and displaced some of the bones of his neck. Surgical aid was immediately put in requisition, and the bones of his neck were put in proper place, but the injury had completely paralyzed his entire body except the head, so that, as he can take no nourishment, his death must ensue.

A freight conductor on the Providence and Worcester Railroad, was recently prostrated by the extreme heat, while on his train. When found by one of his brakemen, his head and shoulders were hanging between two cars. When taken home he was to all appearance dead, his face being black as the stove. It took twenty-four hours to bring him to consciousness.

A young man from Auburn, employed in Worcester, was fatally injured by the cars on Saturday morning of last week. While standing between the Worcester and Norwich Railroad tracks and one of the buildings between Southbridge and Park streets, he was struck by a passing freight train, and crushed between the cars and the wall.

The New Bedford Marshal arrested an insane woman the other day, who was promenading the street with a bloody cat in one hand which she had killed, and in the other hand a knife on which was held the heart of the cat, which she declared was possessed of witches. The knife was taken from her, and she was taken to the station-house.

A passenger having been put off a train upon the Housatonic Railroad for not paying his fare, placed obstructions across the track to throw the next train off, but they were fortunately discovered in time and a terrible accident prevented. The miscreant who put them on the track was also discovered and lodged in jail.

A manual of the railroads in the United States and Canada, recently published, gives an account of three hundred and sixty-four roads. Of these only one hundred and four pay dividends, the other two hundred and sixty never paying anything at all to the stockholders.

A citizen of Epsom, N. H., in attempting to cross a pasture in which a bull was kept, was savagely attacked by the animal and terribly gored. The bull was so furious that no one dared go into the pasture, and he was finally shot at long range and his victim rescued.

Two men and a woman attacked a lady in the surf at Cape May, last week, and attempted to rob her of her rings; but the lady's outcries aroused the attention of other bathers, and the miscreants hastened to escape.

On Tuesday of last week, John Grant and Alexander Patten were terribly mangled by the premature discharge of a blast near Hardwick, Vt. Grant died the next morning, but it was thought that Patten might recover.

Henry Hill of Clayville, R. I., was standing with his horse under a tree by the roadside, during a shower on Monday afternoon of last week, when a thunderbolt descended upon them, and both man and horse were killed.

A party of men in a pasture in Stark, N. H., came upon a nest of snakes in a hollow log, and killed one hundred and two of them, one of which measured three feet four inches, and another three feet six inches in length.

A man employed as a nurse in a Philadelphia hospital was detected in robbing the sick and helpless patients, was indicted, tried, convicted, and sent to the State-prison for three years.

Two policemen in New Haven had an exciting fight with a mad dog on Thursday of last week. By expert dodging and five bullets they escaped hydrophobia, and killed the dog.

A man in Lovelaceville, Ky., called another out of church, and in an altercation which ensued in the vestibule, the man who had been summoned out of church shot his antagonist dead.

A citizen of Indianapolis went on a cat shooting expedition the other night, and wounded a schoolma'am who was innocently studying astronomy.

The wheat crop of Minnesota this year is twenty millions of bushels over and above the home consumption.

STAND BY THE RIGHT.

BY CALEB DUNN.

Stand by the right, where'er you be,
In honor place your trust!
Though men may scoff and call you weak,
Still let your every act bespeak
A mind that will be just.

Stand by the right when foes assail!
March! march with bravery on,
And you shall gain the glorious prize
Which in the future surely lies
For labor nobly done.

Stand by the right, e'en though you find
There's trouble in your path!
Brave is the man who dares to stand
With fearless heart and active hand,
And scorns the scoffer's wrath.

Stand by the right, and never swerve
From duty's plain decree!
March with the good, and you shall win
Grand victories over wrong and sin,
And crush adversity.

Stand by the right, and you will find
Success and honor too;
Stand by the right, the true, the just!
In Heaven place your constant trust—
To manhood e'er be true.

Stand by the right! the skies may lower,
The sun may cease to shine,
But you will find that in the storm
God's hand hath placed a blessing warm—
A blessing all divine.

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

A "VISITATION OF PROVIDENCE."

A moment of awful consternation succeeded the entrance of Grimrod into Miss Floyd's private parlor. The heiress stood up and looked at him with a wild and horrified visage. Miss Floyd's sinister visitor, Antonio Frivoli, sprang to his feet with a strange cry upon his lips. And well might he and Miss Floyd tremble before the figure thus confronting them.

Lord Waldemar's business manager advanced into the pretty rose-tinted room, and halted in the mingled glow of firelight and candlelight, grim and terrible, his lank figure looking strangely elongated, his thin lips curling in a sneer, his dark and evil face lighted up by his burning eyes. If he had looked the pictures of Mephistopheles before, he looked more than ever like them now.

To add to the strangeness and terror of his appearance, he did not speak, but only looked from one to the other of the cowering pair with his horrible sneer and with his scorching gaze.

Unable to bear either, Miss Floyd uttered a shriek, and tottered back to her silken lounge.

Antonio Frivoli glared around him, like a rat in a trap, swaying to and fro, with some wild idea of escape.

"Allow me to introduce myself, Signor Frivoli," said Grimrod, at last, in a soft and silvery voice, which yet cut the air like a gleaming sword blade. "I am Nelson Grimrod, Lord Waldemar's business manager, at your service."

Frivoli's bloodless lips parted, but no sound came from them.

"I had halted for a moment under Miss Floyd's windows on my way home," continued Grimrod, still in that smooth and icy voice, "when I heard your singular bird-call, and beheld Miss Floyd appear upon her balcony. I heard your brief colloquy. When you climbed up the wall by the bands of ivy, and entered into Miss Floyd's private rooms, I, as the faithful servant and friend of Lord Waldemar, and the conservator of the family honor, crept up the ivy after you, and crouched in the balcony there just outside the window. I have had the pleasure of hearing your entire conversation with Miss Floyd, my dear Signor Frivoli, and I need not tell you how much I have been interested in your speculations and theories, nor how charmed I have been by the history of your thorough and singular researches."

The foreign adventurer had not the nerve or the brain of the British villain. His teeth fairly chattered, and still his head moved from side to side in the vain search for some loop-hole of escape.

"I am at a loss to know my duty in this matter," resumed Grimrod, after an impressive pause. "I suppose I ought to alarm the house—to call up the servants—to arouse Lord Waldemar! It is, in fact, my duty to have this midnight intruder arrested as a burglar."

"If you try that game," said Frivoli, beginning to recover himself, and assuming a threatening air which looked like the puny defiance of a child to the power of some strong and ruthless man, "I have some letters of Miss Floyd on my person which will prove to Lord Waldemar that I did not enter his house as a burglar, but as his granddaughter's lover."

"Ah, yes, the letters!" said Grimrod easily. "You sold two of them to Miss Floyd. The price of the remaining eight is eight hundred pounds. As money seems to be your object, you will probably not be too particular as to who is the purchaser of your wares. I will buy them."

"You!"

"I. Miss Floyd is the representative of a grand old house. As her faithful servant and that of her grandfather, I will come to her assistance in this affair. I'll give you eight hundred pounds for the letters."

Frivoli drew a long breath, and began to feel more at his ease.

"If you mean business," he ejaculated, "you'll find me agreeable. When you came in, you looked so much like Murder incarnate that I was afraid of you. If you've got the money with you, I'll give you the letters now."

"Unfortunately," said Grimrod, showing his teeth in a strange smile, "I haven't the small sum you mention upon my person. But it is at my house, and you can go with me and get it."

"Well, yes; that is satisfactory enough," admitted Frivoli. "Of course you wouldn't carry such a sum around with you. But I'm not ready to go yet. I have something more to say to Miss Floyd."

Grimrod inclined his head and waited.

Miss Floyd had buried her face in the cushions of her lounge, and now upraised it, showing that she had heard all that had been said. She was trembling and scared. She was even more terrified at Grimrod than at the adventurer, and more in awe of him than of Frivoli.

"What more can you have to say to me?" she asked, turning her gaze upon the foreigner.

"I may as well tell it before Mr. Grimrod. He has heard so much that I need not attempt to be secret in the rest I have to say," said Frivoli, more and more himself as his mind recovered its strength and he began to feel his power. "I must repeat what I have before said—you are not the real heiress of the Waldemars. You are not Lord Waldemar's granddaughter. You have not a drop of Floyd blood in your veins. As I said, I don't know nor care who you are, and who you are not. All I know is that you are in somebody else's place, and that I must be paid to keep the secret."

"It is not true," said Miss Floyd, cowering. "I am Lord Waldemar's granddaughter. Tell him that I am, Mr. Grimrod."

"Mr. Grimrod can repeat the lesson a hundred times, but his assertion won't alter the facts," said Frivoli doggedly. "And the facts are that Hilda Floyd's nurse was named Margaret Cropsey, and she was not the same person as Mrs. Henrietta Watchley; that Margaret Cropsey went to Malta with her young charge, and I have traced her to Valetta, where she is supposed to have died; that I believe her to be living to-day somewhere on the face of the earth, and I believe also that the real Hilda Floyd is living. A sharp detective might find them both. This is not all I have learned. The real Hilda Floyd was, at a year old, one of the daintiest little beauties that ever lived. She bore an astonishing resemblance to her father, which resemblance time must have deepened. She had her father's yellow hair—yours is drab; and she had black eyes—yours are blue."

"A singular discrepancy or alteration," said Grimrod, glancing at Miss Floyd's features. "I fancy you must have been misinformed, Signor."

"I can prove what I say. I can procure affidavits from the fellow-lodger of Mrs. Floyd, and from the doctor who attended her in her last illness, before her removal to the hospital. They knew the child well, and remembered her perfectly. You saw them both at Trieste, Mr. Grimrod, while you were searching for the heiress of Lord Waldemar. That search of yours seemed thorough and honest. You may be honest for all I know. But you are either dishonest, or you have been tricked and cheated and duped into bringing yonder impostor into Lord Waldemar's house as his granddaughter. You seem to be too sharp to be easily cheated: hence I conclude that you have connived at the imposture. That yonder girl is an impostor I can prove. Now what will you and she give me to keep the secret?"

"I know of no secret in the matter," said Grimrod coolly. "If I have been deceived in the identity of the heiress, which I won't allow, I must look for the real one. The matter is very simple, you see."

Frivoli's countenance fell.

"I shall have to depend upon Miss Floyd," he exclaimed. "She has got a nice berth here, and won't easily relinquish it. If she does not pay me what I demand, I'll try to find the real heiress. A girl with golden hair and black eyes won't be so difficult to trace, if I can only get the right clue to start with. I'll go back to Valetta and find the name of every ship and captain leaving Malta at the date and day on which Margaret Cropsey was sent away from the Valetta hotel, the Floyd child in her arms, and her brain already turned with fever. I'll find every captain in turn, and question him. I am sure to find the girl in some hospital or asylum, living as a peasant in some country or other, or possibly a domestic servant here in England."

Hilda Floyd arose again, her eyes full of a sullen desperation, and the calmness of despair upon her.

"What do you want to keep this secret?" she demanded, regardless of Grimrod's gesture to her to remain silent. "What pay do you exact?"

"Not your hand in marriage," replied Frivoli. "If you were the true heiress, I'd force you to marry me; but under the circumstances, I shall do better to allow you to remain where you are. My price for absolute silence in the matter will be high. I cannot still the pangs of conscience, which will upbraid me for wronging Lord Waldemar and the real Hilda Floyd, with any small sum. I shall want an annuity for life of a thousand pounds a year."

Miss Floyd looked aghast.

"Where am I to find any such sum?" she exclaimed.

"Borrow it of your 'faithful servant' Grimrod here," said Frivoli, "and pay him an exorbitant interest. You can pay back the original sums when you are safe and secure in your position as Baroness Waldemar. Mr. Grimrod, with all his integrity, will, I am sure, be willing to turn an honest penny in this way, the more especially as Margaret Cropsey and the real Hilda Floyd may possibly both be dead, and he can give his conscience the benefit of the doubt."

Miss Floyd turned to the manager abruptly.

"You have heard all," she said. "Frivoli has proofs that I am not Hilda Floyd, but he will be silent if I pay him. Will you pay him for me? I will repay you in time, Mr. Grimrod, with heavy interest. You will have but to wait a few years. Grandpapa can't last forever. And I promise you, if you will keep me in my present position, and help me out of this trouble, I will keep you always in your post as business manager, with double your present salary."

"I should want more," replied Grimrod. "I should demand a promise from you that you will marry whom I have chosen for you."

"I promise! I promise!" said the girl eagerly.

"Then I will act for you in this matter. This fellow shall receive his annuity. I shall keep these letters as a guaranty of your good faith. The interview, so far as you are concerned, Miss Floyd, ends here. You can safely leave the affair in my hands, and go to bed and to sleep. Signor Frivoli, we will descend as we came, and go to my house. I will lead the way."

He bowed to the young lady, and that odd sneer was still upon his lips, and withdrew to the balcony. He climbed over the railing, and slowly descended along the ivy branches, clinging to the trellises beneath until he reached the ground.

Frivoli, with a gay adieu to Miss Floyd, climbed over the balcony railing, and also began to descend.

Grimrod, breathing hard, felt in the inner pocket of his coat for the pistol he usually carried on his person. It was not there, having been left in his business coat. He withdrew his hand quickly, and the adventurer descended in safety to the ground.

"We will take a short cut to my house," said the the manager smoothly. "I am in haste to get possession of the letters. Are you stopping at the village inn, Signor?"

"Yes, I left my valise there," was the reply.

Grimrod conducted Frivoli through the park, which was dark and gloomy at that hour, and chill with the sweeping March winds. A brisk walk of half a mile brought them out at a small gate opening upon the public road. Grimrod unlocked the gate with a key he produced from his pocket, and led Frivoli across the road to his own house, which was set back behind a charming lawn.

Grimrod's house had a deserted look, although the hall and office lamp burned dimly. His two servants, an old woman and her son, were gone to bed. He let himself into his house with a night-key, and ushered Frivoli into his office.

"I sha'n't be able to do anything about that annuity to-night," he said, closing the door and turning up the light. "How soon shall you want the first payment of the annuity?"

"Before I leave this neighborhood," said Frivoli uncompromisingly.

"I haven't the money in the house," said Grimrod, "and I don't dare give you a check for the amount, for fear of exciting comment. I prefer to pay you the money in gold or bank-notes. You can stay at the village to-morrow, and come and see me again to-morrow evening, when I will have the thousand pounds ready for you. How will that suit you?"

"Very well. I want bank-notes. They are easiest to carry."

"I have just eight hundred pounds in my safe," remarked Grimrod, "and you may get out the letters while I get the money."

He unlocked a cupboard or closet at one side of the room, the open door screening him from Frivoli's gaze. The adventurer sat down and took out his letters.

The lower portion of the closet opened by Grimrod was occupied by a heavy and broad fire-proof and burglar-proof safe. Above the safe were shelves which were covered with bottles of rare wines, jars of tobacco, boxes of cigars, and a few quaintly carved pipes. Grimrod opened his safe, and took out from a small locked drawer a tall goblet of Bohemian glass of great value and beauty. He took his glass in one hand and a corked bottle of wine and a corkscrew in the other, and brought them to the table at which the foreigner was seated.

"Help yourself, Signor," he said, with a seemingly reluctant sort of hospitality. "It's a cold night, and I dare say you are chilled."

Without waiting for a reply, the manager went back to the closet and groped for several minutes in his safe.

Frivoli had a weakness for wine, to the use of which he was accustomed. But he was wary also. He examined the seal upon the bottle, and assured himself that it had not been tampered with. He turned the goblet upside down and blew in it, but it was dry and seemed clean. He did not notice that some transparent substance had dried upon the bottom. He uncorked the bottle and filled his glass, and as Grimrod lingered at the safe, he sipped the liquor slowly and with evident relish. Presently he finished the contents of his glass at a draught.

Grimrod came from his safe, with a packet of bank-notes in one hand and a Bohemian glass goblet, like the one before produced, in the other. This one had no dried substance within it. He filled this glass from the bottle Frivoli had opened, and drank off the wine with gusto.

"The real Rudesheimer!" he remarked. "The letters now, Signor. Here is the money."

The adventurer gave up the letters which Miss Floyd had written to him and received the money. He counted it over, declared it right, and stowed it away on his person.

Grimrod put away the letters in his safe, and the goblets also, locked the safe and the closet, and said:

"That is all for to-night. Come at this time to-morrow night, Signor, and you'll find a thousand pounds waiting for you."

The adventurer arose, and Grimrod showed him out. At the gate, Frivoli halted and glanced back. The manager was standing on the steps, lamp in hand, the light falling on his face, and upon his features and in his eyes gleamed the horrible light that had before frightened the foreigner. He shuddered now, and muttered:

"He looks like a malignant, triumphant demon! There is murder in his eyes!"

He hurried from the place as if pursued.

Grimrod, laughing softly, went into the house and secured his door.

"That fellow is disposed of," he said to himself. "That danger is met and overcome. It's true I am eight hundred pounds the poorer, but these letters will be worth the money. They place the girl completely in my power. There'll be no more insolence toward me—no more talk of discharging me when she becomes Lady Waldemar. She is henceforth my puppet. She will marry Darrel Moer at my bidding. After all, the little adventure brings good to me. As for the adventurer himself, he exemplifies the old saying that 'a little learning is a dangerous thing.' He knew too much!"

He went to bed and to sleep.

The next morning, Hilda Floyd, looking weary but pretty in her cashmere morning dress, presided at the Manor breakfast-table. Lord Waldemar breakfasted in his own room, but Darrel Moer and Mrs. Watchley were in their places. The butler brought in the letter-bag, and Miss Floyd unlocked it, dispensing its contents. There were letters for Lord Waldemar and for Moer, and several newspapers which were to be taken up to the Baron. Miss Floyd put them all back into the bag, excepting Moer's letters, and gave them into the butler's hands. Yet he lingered, his countenance betraying some excitement.

"What's the matter, Foss?" asked Darrel Moer. "Is my uncle ill?"

"Oh, no, it's not that, sir," said the butler; "but I went over for the bag myself to the village, and there's a great excitement there, sir. There was a foreigner stopping at the Prince Consort, sir, a dark sort of chap, who came up from Lunnon last evening, sir. No one knew him, and he seemed to know no one, though they do say he was most particular anxious in his inquiries about this family, sir—"

"That's odd," said Moer.

"Yes, sir; very odd, sir. That's what I says to myself. He wa'n't here for no good purpose, asking close questions about my young lady, and about you, sir, and even about Mr. Grimrod, going into his pedigree, and his wife's pedigree, and digging up, as one might say, Mr. Grimrod's little baby that died sixteen years ago! Well, this curious foreigner—which I think he was a burglar in disguise, and his name, they say, was Antonio Frivolous, or some such thing—he was found dead in his bed at the Prince Consort this morning. His pockets were chock-full of money—eight hundred odd pounds—and no one knows what he came up here for, nor what is the matter of him. The doctor says he died of heart disease. The crowner's verdict 'll be he died by 'visitation of Providence.' And all that anybody knows is that he's stone-dead, and his secrets, if he had any, are dead with him."

CHAPTER XXVI.

HONOR'S CIRCLE OF FRIENDS WIDENING.

The Waldemar town house in Park Lane was a fine old mansion with a double front, and with a high flight of steps, which was guarded by two ferocious looking stone lions. The house had been closed since the death of the present lord's predecessor, a period of some five years, the present lord having been without family, and preferring to lodge at a private hotel just out of Piccadilly, and to dine at his club.

But now that he had his acknowledged granddaughter and heiress upon his hands, Lord Waldemar had sent down from Yorkshire his housekeeper and a staff of servants to put the town house in order, and prepare it for the reception of his enlarged family.

And upon the Monday which he had mentioned as the date of his return to town, his lordship arrived at his Park Lane residence, accompanied by Miss Floyd, Mrs. Watchley, and Miss Floyd's maid.

Grimrod had remained in Yorkshire, but was likely to be soon in London on business. Darrel Moer had remained at the Manor until the departure of the family, and had then gone to Lancashire, full of anxiety in regard to Honor, the ill success of his valet having been duly reported to him.

Upon the day after the installation of Miss Floyd in Lord Waldemar's town house, the Baron called upon his kinswoman, the Marchioness of Roxburghe, to consult with her concerning Miss Floyd.

He found her ladyship confined to her bed with rheumatism, and discovered that the illness was likely to be protracted for weeks, and even months, it being of a chronic description. The Marchioness was forced to decline the post of chaperon to Miss Floyd, declaring that she should go to Nice as soon as she could be moved.

The Baron reëntered his carriage and returned to Park Lane. When passing the house of Lady Thaxter, he pulled the check strap and alighted, with the resolve to carry his dilemma to her ladyship for solution.

Lady Thaxter had been his late wife's relative, and Lord Waldemar esteemed her as peerless among women. He wondered that he had not asked her to chaperon his granddaughter. He had been for years an almost constant visitor at the Thaxter House when in town, and had grown to entertain a sincere affection for young Sir Hugh Tregaron, whom he frequently met there.

He was admitted into the house, and ushered into the drawing-room.

As it chanced, Lady Thaxter was alone, seated near the fire, busy with some worsted embroidery. She arose at Lord Waldemar's entrance, dropping her work, and greeting him with a beaming face and outstretched hands.

"I was just thinking of you, my dear Baron," she said heartily. "I am very glad to see you."

Lord Waldemar's stern bronze face lighted up, and he replied to her with equal warmth.

Lady Thaxter placed a deep-cushioned chair for him at the corner of the hearth, and resumed her seat.

"Do you know," she said smilingly, yet half reproachfully, "that I am deeply offended with you, my lord, for not giving me an opportunity of congratulating you upon your great happiness? I never even knew that Wallace was dead, or had left a daughter, until I read the paragraph in the *Court Journal*. Surely you might have written to me."

"I don't know who put the paragraph in the *Journal*," said the Baron. "These reporters must be ubiquitous. I hadn't written the news to any one, excepting indeed Lady Roxburghe."

"That accounts for it," said Lady Thaxter. "Lady Roxburghe's house is a perfect lyceum, as one might call it, for all the rising men of genius, whether journalists, authors, or artists. And now, my dear friend, I beg you to break the silence of years, and let me speak of poor Wallace. You do not shrink from his name as you did, I see."

"Because he is dead!" declared the Baron. "Death condones all faults."

Lady Thaxter sighed. There was that in his lordship's tone and manner that showed that even in his grave Wallace Floyd was unforgiven by his father.

"How long has Wallace been dead?" she asked.

"Sixteen years. I did not know that he was dead even until lately. We won't speak of him, my dear Lady Thaxter. You and I never agreed about the justice of my treatment of my son. He was ungrateful, wicked, and degenerate."

"And he died under the weight of his father's curse!" said Lady Thaxter gravely. "Poor boy! Poor sensitive boy! How affectionate he was! How he loved you, Lancelot! I have always been sure that there must have been some secret agency at work to render him so disobedient and unfilial. That marriage was not like him."

"The secret agency was that of the Delilah he married," responded Lord Waldemar grimly.

"And she is dead too—poor girl!"

"Yes, she died six months after his death. They are buried side by side at Trieste, and one stone marks their graves. I sent my agent there lately—not to see to the graves—Wallace Floyd is nothing to me now—but to discover my granddaughter."

"But, Lancelot, surely, surely you will have the bones of your son and his young wife brought back to England."

"Never! What their child may do in time, I cannot tell, but while I live they shall lie where they now do. Wallace Floyd ceased to be my son when he married Janet Arlyn."

Lady Thaxter's eyes moistened. She had loved young Wallace Floyd, and it pained her to think of his neglected grave in far Trieste.

"O, Lancelot!" she murmured. "I cannot understand how, with your generous, noble nature, so full of tenderness at times, you can still be so bitter and revengeful toward your own flesh and blood, your own and only son. I believe half this hardness is put on. You were deeply angered by Wallace's inconsiderate marriage, but I have heard that Miss Arlyn was a gentle, trusting little creature, as shy as a bird, not at all like her wild, rough father. Why should your enmity to her father be extended to her?"

"She had the Arlyn blood; that was enough. Were there not fair women enough in England, that my son must clandestinely marry the daughter of the man I hated, and make me the laughing-stock of half Yorkshire? Was it not indecent in him to bring under my roof, as my daughter, one of that vile race? Forgive him? Never!"

His passionate voice rang through the rooms.

Lady Thaxter was silent for a brief space; then she asked:

"Is Wallace's daughter like him?"

"Not at all. She is all Arlyn."

"She is gentle then, and shy, and sweet?"

"By no means. She is bold, insolent, forward, as well as secretive, and, I think, false."

Lady Thaxter shuddered.

"Lancelot," she said gently, "do not let your hatred of her parents tempt you to be cruelly unjust to the poor young girl. She is your direct descendant, your heiress, your successor. I am sure you misjudge her. Is she beautiful?"

"If you like dolls—yes. You think me bitter and unjust, Julia, but I am only honest. The girl has not a grain of sincerity and honesty in her. My son was truthful; she is not. She has depth, but it is that depth which comes from a scheming nature. You look horrified, yet I speak truth. I will tell you what I have told to no human being," and Lord Waldemar's lips trembled under his frost-white mustache, and his stern eyes were wet with sudden tears. "When I found that my son was dead, and that there existed upon this earth a lineal descendant of my own, his child, I could have overlooked the Arlyn taint in her blood, and taken her to my heart. Julia, I am ashamed to own it, but my soul yearned for the girl. I would not confess it to myself, but I longed for her coming. Had I found her what my son once was, I should have made her my idol. But she had the worst qualities of her parents. There is no look of my son in her features. She is repulsive to me."

"What do you intend to do with her?"

"I did intend to give her masters in every accomplishment, and keep her with me a year before allowing her to enter society. She is well educated and well bred. She thinks herself perfect. Yesterday I had some conversation with her at the Manor, when she informed me that she desired to enter society this season. She treated me to a burst of temper when I objected, and I promised to consider the matter. She is but seventeen."

"Altogether too young to enter society, Waldemar," said Lady Thaxter decidedly. "Where did you have her educated?"

Lord Waldemar replied by giving her ladyship a succinct history of his declared granddaughter.

"Certainly, if she has been educated in this quiet way at Innsbruck," said her ladyship, "Miss Floyd is scarcely fitted to be ushered at once into fashionable life. Can you not effect a compromise with her? Can she not visit your old family friends, and enter small gatherings, but defer her presentation to the Queen and her complete launch into society until another year?"

"If you recommend that plan—certainly. Will you undertake to chaperon her?"

"With pleasure. The more especially as I am persuaded that she is not so bad as you have painted her. I will invite a few friends here to dine to meet a guest whom I am now entertaining, and Miss Floyd can catch her first glimpse of fashionable life on that occasion."

"Is Tregaron with you?" inquired the Baron.

Lady Thaxter replied in the affirmative.

"Nothing would give me more pleasure than to have him fancy my granddaughter," said Lord Waldemar. "But she is not good enough for him."

"How is Darrel Moer pleased with his cousin?" asked her ladyship.

"They get on well together. They are much alike. But Darrel feels the change in his position keenly. He has not turned out well. I wish he would marry, and take himself out of my life. He promised well, Julia, but the promise has failed most miserably. Ah, what a voice! Who is that speaking?"

"The Countess of Rothsmere, my guest, Baron. She is a Hungarian, a perfect princess, immensely wealthy, and has a host of retainers. I am sure I told you about her. I visited her in Hungary last year, on letters of introduction, and she treated me like a princess. She is a woman of powerful mind, and is devoted to all the great questions of the day. She has read all your speeches, and is very anxious to meet you. Permit me to tell her that you are here."

The Baron assented, and Lady Thaxter passed through the inner drawing-room to the boudoir where the Countess of Rothsmere, Honor Glint, and Sir Hugh Tregaron, were in the midst of some discussion.

"My Hungarian admirer is probably a tall, gaunt, spectacled woman," thought Lord Waldemar; "but she has a remarkably pure and flexible voice."

Lady Thaxter returned with her guest, and effected the necessary introduction.

The Baron arose with his rare, old-fashioned courtesy, bowing low to the lovely woman, whose beautiful face, framed in gray hair and lighted by her sapphire eyes, had all the effect upon him of some rare and glorious picture.

He said to himself that he had never seen a lady so beautiful in his life. Something of his admiration expressed itself in the brightening and softening of his black eyes and bronzed features.

"I am happy in meeting Lord Waldemar," said the Countess, a little pale, but thoroughly self-possessed. "I quite know many of your speeches by heart, my lord, while your attitude in every public question is in accordance with all my sympathies. If I were to be perfectly frank, I should say that half my pleasure in coming to England was the hope of meeting the lion lord, Baron Waldemar."

His lordship flushed with pleasure. He saw that the words were not idle flattery, but the sincere utterances a of grand and truthful nature.

"Your approbation, Countess," he said, "I count as one of my choicest triumphs. If you should visit the House to-morrow evening, your presence would give me inspiration in speaking upon a bill to be brought forward, and in which I am deeply interested. No more interesting entertainment can be enjoyed by a foreigner of culture, than listening to the debates of the rulers of a great nation."

The Hungarian Countess made an appropriate reply, and the Baron exerted himself, as he seldom did, to be brilliant and entertaining. Wisdom and wit both found utterance from his lips. He looked indeed a "lion lord," with his stern, impassioned face, his glowing eyes, his earnest manner.

A little later, Sir Hugh Tregaron came in with Honor Glint, whom he was anxious to introduce to his friend Lord Waldemar.

The old Baron arose and held out his hand in a warm greeting to the young Cornish Baronet.

Lady Thaxter introduced her young guest to Lord Waldemar.

The Baron looked full into the pure, proud, tender face, with its ripples of golden hair and its vivid black eyes, and started back, strangely pallid.

The sweet, spirited, ideal face recalled to him his lost son with a cruel force. He drew his breath hard.

"I beg your pardon, Lady Thaxter," he said huskily, "but I did not hear the young lady's name."

"It is Miss Glint—Honor Glint," said Lady Thaxter distinctly. "You see the marvelous resemblance, my lord? I noticed it directly. Miss Glint comes from Lancashire."

Lord Waldemar compelled himself to bow and to speak calmly, but for the first time in his life a sickening faintness swept over him, and his brain reeled and his sight grew dim. He sat down abruptly.

The Hungarian Countess had watched the scene with startled, troubled eyes, and now said softly:

"Does the young lady remind you of some one, my lord?"

"Yes," replied the Baron, wiping his cold, wet brow; "she reminds me of one who is dead—of my only son, Madame. The resemblance is positively startling. I could almost think my son's eyes were looking up at me out of the girl's face. But resemblances, even such as this, are not uncommon, I dare say."

"Oh, no, they are not uncommon," returned the Countess, with a long, fluttering sigh, and an anxious shadow in the depths of her blue eyes. "I read in the *Journal*, my lord, that your beautiful young granddaughter will enter society this season. Does she very closely resemble your son, her father?" she asked carelessly. "If so, she will be charmed to find a counterpart to herself in this young stranger."

"She does not resemble her father, Madame," replied Lord Waldemar. "She—she resembles her mother."

His bitterness spoke in those last few words. He uttered them like a curse, and a sudden flame darted from his eyes.

"You did not like your daughter-in-law, I see," said the Hungarian Countess.

"No, Madame. I hated her and all her family!" and the suppressed voice of the Baron quivered with a sudden anger, before which even Lady Rothsmere shrank back in affright. "I beg your pardon, Madame. Lady Thaxter will explain to you why I am so sore upon this point, and I beg you again to forgive my rudeness."

His lordship lingered yet a while, the conversation drifting into pleasanter channels. At last he took his leave, Lady Thaxter accompanying him to the head of the stairs.

"'There is no fool like an old fool,'" thought Lord Waldemar, as he made his way to the street. "I believe I have fallen in love with that beautiful Hungarian Countess. I am not so very old; she must be thirty. I wonder if she would laugh at me, if I were to propose to her in due time to marry me. Older men than I am marry every day. And that beautiful young girl, Miss Glint—I never saw so radiant a vision! If Hilda had been like her! She had my son's eyes, and my son's hair! My heart fairly yearned over her!"

He sighed profoundly, and his features quivered in mental pain.

Meanwhile Lady Thaxter returned to her guests.

"What did you think of your 'lion lord,' Countess?" she asked lightly.

"I liked him," was the rather constrained reply. "He answers my highest expectations. But he seems to have a fearful temper, dear Lady Thaxter."

"He has a wicked, hot temper," said Lady Thaxter; "but he is nevertheless grand-souled, generous, full of kindliness and genial impulses. He was imbittered by the clandestine marriage of his only son to the daughter of a man whom he hated, and he has never recovered from the blow. He denounced his poor young daughter-in-law to me this very afternoon as a Delilah, and regards her very memory with a consuming hatred. He hates his granddaughter, because, he says, she is an Arlyn. I am anxious to see her. I shall call upon her to-morrow, and have her dine with us *en famille* in a day or two. Poor lonely young creature! I am to chaperon her, and I shall try to make up to her for the love she evidently lacks in her own home."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

VERY MUCH LIKE.

The case of Dobbs was not an exceptional case. His experience had been the experience of thousands, and will be the experience of thousands yet to come. Dobbs had "fought, bled, and died" for his party,—that is, he had *sweat* blood, and had been willing to die for the cause. And his party triumphed. In the hour of triumph Dobbs gathered up his laurels and laid them at the feet of the dispensing power. He wanted an office. He particularly asked for an office in the Custom-house. But Dobbs had not been one of the great lights. He had been an honest, conscientious worker, but had understood nothing of the arranging and pulling of vast systems of hidden wires. Men more noisy and rambunctious were in ahead of him, and he was left out in the cold. In short, the fat offices in the Custom-house were all disposed of before his turn came; and he went back to his legitimate calling, to work honestly for his daily bread—went back with a flea in his ear, and with disgust in his bosom.

One pleasant afternoon Dobbs took his little son out for a walk, and in the course of their perambulations they passed the Custom-house. The grand structure of granite—so strong and so dark, with its doors and shutters of iron—attracted the boy's attention.

"Father," he said, "just see this big building. What strong doors. Is it a jail?"

A grim smile, fading into a baleful look, flitted across Dobbs' face as he replied,—

"It is very like a jail, my son. *Only rogues are employed there!*"

S. C., JR.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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Usury—The Laws Regarding It—Anecdote of John Quincy Adams.

By the law of this State no person is allowed to receive over seven per cent. interest on any loan of money; and a note on which a higher rate of interest is reserved or taken is void.

Moreover, a violation of this law is a misdemeanor, which subjects the person guilty of it to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, or imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both.

A year or two ago, several of our most aristocratic, "respectable," and pretentious bankers and business men were indicted under this statute. The evidence against them they well knew would be conclusive, and they severally pleaded *Guilty*. Sentence was suspended for a few days, during which they became very much frightened, for fear that they would be sent to the Penitentiary. One of them had been a member of Congress, and they were all rich and proud men, and the mortification of imprisonment had great terrors to them. They were ultimately let off, however, with a simple fine.

The policy of usury laws is a subject on which people widely differ. The Bible, in many places, denounces usurers in very strong terms.

It may be remarked that usury originally applied to any interest whatever on money; although its meaning is now restricted to rates which are deemed excessive.

Writers on political economy generally favor the abolition of all laws on the subject of usury, and the advocates of their views have greatly increased in number. Still, usurers are regarded with no inconsiderable degree of abhorrence, especially in rural districts, where they are looked upon as oppressors willing to speculate and profit on the necessities and misfortunes of their fellow-beings.

An anecdote is related of JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, when he was President of the United States. The ADAMS family have always been noted for their quality of thrift, and their regard for pecuniary augmentation. The enemies of President JOHN QUINCY ADAMS reported that he was guilty of profanation of the White House, as they regarded it, by shaving notes within its august premises. A warm political friend and ardent admirer of Mr. ADAMS—a resident of the District of Columbia—resented the imputation—a foul one in his view. He declared that he would test the truth of what he believed to be a scandal, and the invention of malice. Accordingly he took two notes with him, and called on the President to know if he would advance him the money on them. Mr. ADAMS, never suspecting the object of the applicant, discounted the notes, but charged him more than the regular rate of interest.

The indignation which the conduct of Mr. ADAMS excited in the mind of his partisan, from whom he exacted usury, knew no bounds. He deserted him; he denounced him; he hated him with a hatred which was as outspoken as it was intense. He at once joined the opponents of Mr. ADAMS, and became, and remained a most ardent and enthusiastic JACKSON man.

In England, the usury laws have been abolished. The Vice-Chancellor observed, in a case before him a short time ago, that "if a man of full age, with a full knowledge of what he is doing, undertakes to pay five per cent. per minute, that contract must be legally good."

◆

Ungovernable Temper.

How true it is that "he that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

A failure in these respects recently occasioned a series of terrible tragedies in Gloucester county, Ill. A farmer named WHITE, who was not slow to anger, shot a couple of hounds belonging to a neighbor named HOLT, because they were running across his farm. HOLT wanted WHITE to pay for the dogs. WHITE refused to pay for them, and threatened to shoot HOLT. A short time afterward, as HOLT was passing WHITE'S place, a neighbor who was there asked him to stop and see a new thrashing machine work. HOLT climbed over the fence, and went near the thrashing machine; when WHITE immediately assailed him with a pitchfork. HOLT twisted the fork out of his hands, and then WHITE mounted a horse, and rode off to his brother's house to get a gun with which to shoot HOLT, who, meanwhile left the field, and started on his way home. WHITE soon rode back, with a gun loaded with six buckshot, and shot HOLT dead in the road.

Mrs. HOLT, who was ill, on hearing the terrible news, gave a groan of horror and died, and her new-born twins also died. On hearing of the fate of Mrs. HOLT and her infants, the neighbors became wild with rage and vengeance at WHITE, who gave himself up to the sheriff of the county and begged his protection. The sheriff tried to protect him, but in vain. That same night more than two hundred citizens assailed the jail, broke in the door with a log, took WHITE into the yard, and hung him to the limb of a tree.

Thus five lives were sacrificed because men were not slow to anger and did not rule their spirits.

Do Persons who are Killed by Lightning Suffer?

There have been an unusual number of deaths by lightning the present season. To most minds there is something awful in the suddenness of such a death. There are exceptions, however, to this feeling. A case in point was that of the distinguished patriot and orator, of revolutionary renown, JAMES OTIS. It was related of him that he had often been heard to express a wish that when his time should come, his death might be instantaneous, and that he should prefer to be struck by lightning. One day a little cloud came up, and he was standing in the front door of his house observing it. Without any warning, a single bolt descended from this little cloud, and killed him instantly. The wish of his heart had been fulfilled.

Do people suffer when they are killed by lightning?

This is a very interesting question, and one upon which there has been much speculation; for the dread of death, which is natural, and common to all, is greatly enhanced by the idea of extreme pain attending dissolution.

A scientific writer—Dr. John Tyndall—has published a learned essay on this subject, and his conclusion is, that death caused by lightning is not accompanied by any pain whatever. It is an instantaneous "negation of life," or cessation of consciousness, without suffering.

He says that the seat of sensation is the brain, and to it the intelligence of any impression made upon the nerves has to be transmitted before this impression can become manifest in consciousness. The transmission, moreover, requires *time*, and the consequence is that a wound inflicted on a portion of the body distant from the brain is more tardily appreciated than one inflicted adjacent to the brain. By an extremely ingenious experimental arrangement the velocity of this nervous transmission has been determined, and found to be about one hundred feet to the second, or less than one-tenth of the velocity of sound in the air. Taking into account this time required for the transmission of sensation, and the further time believed to be required for the invisible particles constituting the brain to take up the motions or positions necessary for the completion of consciousness, Dr. Tyndall estimates that if a whale, fifty feet long, were wounded in the tail, one second and a tenth would elapse before it would become conscious of the injury.

From these premises the deduction is made that if an injury were inflicted which would render the nerves unfit to be the conductors of the motion which results in sensation, no matter how severe the injury might be, we should be unconscious of it. Or it may be that long before the time required by the brain to complete the arrangement necessary to consciousness, its power of arrangement might be wholly suspended. In such a case, even if the injury were fatal, death would occur without feeling of any kind.

This is the most learned scientific view of the subject. It is supported by numerous well-authenticated cases of persons who have been struck senseless by lightning, and, on their recovery, had no memory of pain.

However, clear as this reasoning is, and strong as the evidence seems to be, there is, and necessarily must be, a degree of mystery hanging over death, however occasioned, which can never be fully dispersed until we experience it ourselves. All the testimony on this subject comes from persons who have not died; none from those who have. We have, and can have, no witnesses from beyond the grave. They are clothed in an impenetrable cloud, and whether they be dumb or not, they are all speechless. From them no word ever comes back to our longing hearts and listening ears. The mystery of mysteries must remain a mystery to us until we join those who have gone before, and then we, in turn, can send no message back to those who remain behind.

◆

Excessive Legislation.

"The world is governed too much," was a fundamental doctrine in the politics of THOMAS JEFFERSON, the author of the Declaration of Independence, and the second President of the United States.

A few laws, plainly expressed and strictly enforced, are all that are required.

But our statute books are swelled by unnecessary and mischievous enactments. Young and new members of the Legislature are ambitious to distinguish themselves by originating and introducing measures, when their time might be spent, with far greater advantage to themselves and their constituents, in silence and study.

It is stated that *over nine hundred acts* were passed by our Legislature at its last session; yet that body was roundly abused by thoughtless critics for not enacting more laws!

Over *forty thousand* new misdemeanors have been created in Great Britain during the reign of Queen VICTORIA. A distinguished member of Parliament, Mr. VERNON HARCOURT, in calling the attention of Parliament to this fact, remarked that they must make a stand against legislation which "in the name of liberty put every one in prison, and in the name of humanity treated every one with cruelty."

A great many laws are enacted making penal certain acts which were already prohibited by previously existing statutes, of which the legislators happen to be ignorant.

An amusing debate sprung up in the British Parliament on an act for the protection of wild birds. The Earl of KIMBERLY thought that swallows, which had been omitted, should be included in the bill. Lord CAIRNS protested against unnecessary legislation, and said he did not believe there was any wholesale destruction of swallows. The Lord Chancellor feared that if the bill should pass, "many persons would incur penalties through ignorance, *cockney sportsmen not knowing what kind of birds they destroyed!*"

◆

One Way to Get Rid of a Drunken Relation.

Dr. J. C. BROWNE, Superintendent of the West Riding Asylum, at Wakefield, England, says:

"Frequent applications are now made from the relatives and friends of habitual drunkards, asking what is to be done with them, and stating that their patience is exhausted. I may mention in illustration the case of a gentleman of some position which came under my notice lately: the patience of his relatives being utterly worn out, they thought the best course to pursue was to send him to board in a hotel, where he might drink himself to death as soon as possible; and," adds Doctor Browne grimly, "*I heard of his death shortly afterward.*"

LAUGHING.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

People who do not know how to laugh are much to be pitied. Not every one who laughs knows how to laugh in the highest sense. An irradiating smile is fine; a small sough, that glances upon the face like a meteor, come and gone in the same instant, is better than nothing. But laughing, like poetry, music, invention, oratory, is given in its higher forms to but few.

We have a relative, a lady, who is gifted in a high degree with the genius of laughing. One should see her when an exquisite story lights up the inner soul. Only the other night three of us sat together. One told an anecdote, that started another, till, like pigeons in a wood, they poured out in flocks. Soon all were in paroxysms. There was no boisterous roaring. Each one performed with refinement, but all were "clean gone." The eldest has a continuous roll that goes on without check till the breath is gone, and the lungs fairly run down; but, gathering a long breath, he dashes down the same long roll again. But soon the muscles ache; with hands abdominally placed, and weaving from side to side, his eyes streaming with tears, he at length gains enough control to escape from that eddy which had been whirling him helplessly around.

Another one laughs by a series of short explosive fusilades, recurring rapidly and continuing in what seems likely to be an endless series. But the lady aforesaid begins in a gentle way, as if controlling every movement. So have I seen a gay rider, ambling at first, then moving off at a trot, breaking into a gallop, and then carried off at a dashing speed in a real run away. It does one's heart good like a medicine to see and hear such a charming performance—so hearty, so natural, so gently furious, so possessed with a demon of laughter that will not be cast out. You shall see the beginning of the laugh carried well along till the excess of it seems to disturb her modesty. She covers her face with a newspaper, and some would think that she was resting. But, look! No sound. Only a jelly-like trembling of the whole body! On—on—till in desperation she runs from the room. Ah, there is good honest heartiness in such an experience, and an overplus of pleasure; the highest pleasure reaches the edge of pain.

It is impossible to discriminate between the wit that produces only pleasure of thought, and that which produces pleasure of laughter. A very simple incident narrated strikes the palpitating nerve of laughter, to the surprise of every one. Some things end their power by once telling. Others are never-failing. Even to think of them sets one off. We wake up nights, and happening to think of a good thing, bring down censure on our head for untimely outbursts of laughter, "when all honest and sober people should be asleep!"

One peculiarity of laughter is, that it rages fearfully when you feel in your soul that it is wicked. It is "in meeting" that the danger is the most alarming. Oh, there are some things that one should never think of in church! Resistance would be vain. All that could be done would be to stuff one's mouth with a handkerchief, and smother all sounds.

No man can explain to another why he laughs. There is nothing more absurd than to ask a man "what there is funny in a story." Stories, like percussion bombs, must explode when they strike, or they are good for nothing. Stories that don't go off are poor stock.

There is one story which we never think of without a ripple, and never tell without a rush of laughter. Indeed, we are shaking now; but very likely our readers will see nothing in it. A good deacon had the bad habit of making very long family prayers. His wife was hard of hearing. One morning, for some reason, he prayed short, and then went to the barn to milk. On returning, he found his wife still kneeling, with closed eyes. He stepped up behind her, and shouted "Amen!" whereat she very quietly rose and went about her work. You don't laugh? Well, the spark is there, but your powder is not good.

◆

DOG CARTS.

I have come to the conclusion that a man may be as idle and as trivial as a woman. It was in Bellevue Avenue, Newport, that this thought occurred to me, when looking at the idle man's last new plaything, that detestable "dog cart," built, I think, in the interest of shoemakers, to show a lady's boot, and in the interest of surgeons, to mend her bones. When I look at the splendid, strong-limbed, bronzed, heroic *looking* men who trot them up and down, from breakfast till dark, with their belittling affectations of striped shirts and cock feathers, as well pleased with the display as their own little boys with their tin carts and curly poodles, and remember the grand, heroic work there is in the world to do, and the few laborers there are in the field, and those, perhaps, ground to the earth by the pressure for daily bread, I feel like seizing horse, dog cart, and the stalwart man of leisure who is the owner thereof, and clapping him upon his fine square shoulders, remind him of his manhood and his squandered opportunities.

For one, I fail to see the difference in triviality between an absorbing passion for a new ribbon and a new harness. For one, I should feel prouder to sit beside the laboring man returning with his tin kettle at nightfall from a good, square day's work on this gentleman's grounds, than to be perched on a pinnacle seat, and chosen as his wife, for no better reason, by my lord, than the steeds he drives.

So much for dog carts and their owners.

"Tell me when we meet Mr. Blank the poet."

"Well, there he comes," I replied.

"What! not in *that* shabby vehicle, with that sleepy horse, and arrayed in a coat whose cut is two fashions behind, though his book may be an advance of several ages."

Well, is not this *his* open sesame, where dog carts cannot penetrate? FANNY FERN.

The Mining Mania Again—A Periodical Disease.

The mania for investing recklessly in mythical mining operations seems to be a periodical disease. Just now it is raging with considerable intensity. Not only wonderful mines of gold and silver are alleged to have been discovered, but diamond mines also, from which precious stones may be shovelled out by the quart. Just where these mines are situated no one seems to know. Even the secretaries of the companies ingenuously confess their ignorance as to the precise locality. "Down in Arizona" is as near as they can come to it. "It doesn't make any difference, you know, just *where* the mine is, if it's only *there*," blandly suggest the sellers of the stock. "The great thing is, you know, to have a rich mine *sure*, and that's just exactly what *we* have," they add, with charming frankness.

If anybody chooses to buy stock of these pleasant gentlemen, he has a right to do so; but to those *Ledger* readers who inquire of us as to such investments, we will say, be exceedingly cautious in parting with your money to strangers, under any circumstances whatever.

MY BALD HEAD.

(*Mes cheveux.*)

PARAPHRASED FROM BERANGER.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

I.

Good friends!—pray listen, if you please,
To Pleasure's licensed preacher:
Hold fast to Liberty and Ease:
So says your reverend teacher.
To laugh at Care, be gay and free,
Her precepts I advise;
I'm bald because I'm sage, you see,
So, listen to the wise!

II.

Good friends! when Care assails a man,
To vex his soul and body,
I think it much the wisest plan
To drown it—in a toddy!
Nay, not too much!—the glass should be
Of very dainty size;
I'm bald because I'm sage, you see!
So, listen to the wise!

III.

Good friends!—these hints will stand the test,
And shouldn't be neglected;
But what's the good of all the rest,
If Beauty is rejected?
Young Love—true love, must ever be
The richest earthly prize;
I'm bald because I'm sage, you see;
So, listen to the wise!

IV.

Good friends!—believe me, only so
We save Life's truest treasures;
By just condensing, as they flow,
Youth's evanescent pleasures.
My sermon's done; who lists to me
The power of Fate defies;
I'm bald because I'm sage, you see;
So, listen to the wise!

◆

THE PLACE WHERE I WAS BORN.

Scrubbing Door-Steps—Black Ribbons on the Shutters—William Penn's Old House a Drinking Saloon—"Like a Woman in her Night-Gown"—A Homely Old Man—Not for a Clergyman.

MY GOOD NEW YORKERS: Here I am in Philadelphia, the place where I was born. "The little window where the sun came peeping in at morn" is here, and opposite it the great ivy vine, green in summer, and red in autumn, that climbs still over the next-door wall. But the house is just like everybody else's house in Philadelphia, with two or three white marble steps, and a red brick pavement, which somebody still scours with a hand-brush, judging from its appearance. It is a strange sight to New York eyes, this morning scrubbing of the outside of the dwellings, including gutter and street, to such a degree that there seems to be nothing left for the city scavengers but to come along with a dust-pan. Very nice too are the results, after the first morning dampness, and calculated to excite envy in breasts where dwell the recollections of New York sidewalks.

But, save in the business parts of the city, Philadelphia seems to be half asleep. All the lower shutters, of solid wood, bowed and tied. One old Quaker lady in the distance; one old gentleman in a broad-brimmed hat, in the middle of the picture; a nice little girl in the foreground you may see looking up the street, but no more; and these all walking slowly and sedately; nobody in a hurry but the postmen, and they only moderately so.

But for its cleanliness, one might believe Philadelphia to have been visited by a plague, for from many of its lower windows, bowed circumspectly, float long black ribbons or pieces of silk. After a death has occurred in a house, these ribbons, tied on at the day of the funeral, remain for a year, in most cases.

It is a sermon on mortality, for no square is without one, to the best of my observation. In the busiest part of the city stands the graveyard, and from the brick wall of this a piece has been cut away and an iron railing substituted, that one may see Benjamin Franklin's grave—a flat gray stone slab lying upon the turf, his name beside that of his wife. Beyond, the peaceful shadows of the green old trees, the white tombstones rising from the grass, and the walls of the old meeting-house. Has the once busy man, now lying there so idle, with the city's traffic rolling by his grave, all eternity to rest in, or is he busy somewhere with work of which we wot not? Who can tell?

Not far away is the house in which he once lived; and down a narrow street William Penn's old house, now a drinking place of the lowest class.

Any other country would have preserved the little house from this desecration; but the only wonder is, that in America it stands so long. And apropos of this, a certain Goth in the New Jersey town of Cranberry, through which one passes *en route* from New York to Philadelphia, has just cut down a great tree under which Brainard preached to the Indians, because its roots had encroached upon the cellar of his very small frame house.

Well, we are young yet, and can't be trusted any more than other children with valuable old possessions.

The public buildings in Philadelphia are very pleasant to look upon; of a prettier gray stone than any that we have, for the most part, and of a chaste and simple order of architecture. Who is it that says that the public buildings of the Quaker City always remind him of "a woman out in the street in her night-gown?" He makes a mistake. They are like Quaker beauties going to meeting, without flounce or furbelow, but very fair to look upon.

I speak, of course, of the majority. There are buildings which vie with our most elaborate ones; and one old family mansion, at least, where the broad marble porch is guarded by two lions and two dogs, who glare fiercely from their marble eyes upon the passers-by, and where, within, the ceilings are magnificently painted; an Italian artist having worked at them, lying upon his back the while, for three good years. When Philadelphia makes a show, it is a real one, on good foundation. No family, save the very poorest, will share a house in Philadelphia; and so you see tiny dwellings of three rooms, and one room above another, in some quarters, and no genuine tenement houses—those banes of decency and cleanliness. Even colored folks are lords of their own castles. By the way, they do there what I have never seen any of the race do in New York, help in the building of houses. The laborers employed on one building which I saw in progress, were all black.

At this summer season fashion is of course out of town, but I fancy that Philadelphia belles are a shade less gaudy and glittering than those of New York. Despite the diminution of poke bonnets, and the rebellion of young Friends as to drab and gray, and the old broad-brim, a Quaker feeling softens the tone of the whole city—softens it more anywhere than in Spring Garden, however, where there is a showier style of house and dress than elsewhere, and where dwell that magnificently built, glowing, bright-eyed, splendid race of people, the wealthy Philadelphia butchers and their families. Butchers' families in New York are generally fat and bilious; *here* they look like Adam and Eve, before anything happened to worry them.

Here too is the Franklin Institute, where, hoarded away on the shelves, are rare books, over which a bibliomaniac might go doubly mad. The kindly old custodian shows us many of his treasures, among the rest a volume devoted to the Church of St. Isaac, at St. Petersburg, in which are careful drawings of everything, from the rough blocks of stone as they are hewn from the quarry, to the beautiful statues that fill so many niches; and estimates, too, of the price of everything, which in their magnitude make poor mortals who never had any millions stand aghast to think of people spending so much.

Here, too, are specimens of "natural printing" wonderful to behold, presented to the Institute by a certain German professor of the art, in which, besides the faces of agates and many leaves and plants and flowers, are collars and trimmings of lace, printed from the lace itself, so that every pattern, every scallop, every tiny flaw in the thread, is represented with undeviating accuracy, at which page our kind entertainer pauses long, as at something most likely to "please a lady." Here also we saw maps of certain little towns, such as New York, Boston and Philadelphia, drawn during the occupation of the British forces during the Revolutionary war. We've "grown a wee" since then, and altered just a little.

But of all that we saw in Philadelphia, Girard College interested us most. The great garden, beautiful and well walled enough to be that of a convent; the outlying buildings; the grandeur of the entrance, the columns of which are larger than any I have ever seen before; the thought of its kindly purpose, and, above all, the statue of its founder standing above the repository of his ashes. When we reflect that every item of this grand yet simple structure was planned by the rich man whose money built it, we can but look upon it as a sort of type of his soul.

There is more in a building than many dream of, of feeling or of want of feeling, of delicacy or of coarseness. Pride breathes its very soul out in the architecture of Greece, and that of Egypt seems only fit to rise above the tombs of the forgotten dead, or over the wretched heads of imprisoned men. There is pride in this structure of old Stephen Girard's, but not the pride of purse; it is that of a grand purpose. There he stands, imaged in marble, above his own coffin ashes. As you ascend the outer steps and enter the wide hall, he looks down upon you. The sculptor has made no ancient Roman of him, as sculptors are wont to do, inappropriately at times. You look upon a homely—ugly is hardly the word—upon a homely old man, in careless, old-fashioned costume. The wrinkles in his trowsers, the folds in his coat, the look that shoes have that have been walked in a good deal, are all set down upon the stone. So are the wrinkles in the unclassical face, and the wearing away of the thin hair. But it is a kindly face, in which one can see the man who for love left his counting-house, when poorer men could not be bought for money, and ministered to those smitten with the yellow-fever, in the reeking hospital, performing every menial duty, shirking no disgusting detail, doing as Christ bids us, but as few ever do. And you can see also the heart that bore from its own childhood memories which softened it to other orphan boys, and bade this home be reared for them. Yet they say that Stephen Girard had very little love in his own life, and with all his wealth was not happy. Surely it could not have been all his own fault.

Above, in a room at which we peep through glass doors, are stored pieces of furniture once used by the founder of this great building; not many, very plain. An antique chair or two; a mirror; some tables; a mysterious looking article, such as modern eyes never rested upon, which may be either a cabinet or a turn-up bedstead; a shabby picture or two; a woman's work-box and two china vases; and in the midst what looks like the veritable "one hoss shay," on the verge of dissolution.

Does the statue ever come down at night and go into this room, and calling from its tomb the ghost of the old horse, once often fastened to the shafts, go riding solemnly about the empty space? Does it ever sit down in the chair, or lean its elbows on the table, or peep into that work-box; and if so, are there love-letters, yellow with age, and a lock of hair tied with faded ribbon, within? One might fancy so, and that indeed the figure is no statue, but Stephen Girard himself, turned to stone by the magic wand of olden fairy tale, to watch that his behests are not forgotten.

One of them was odd enough. *No clergyman is to cross the threshold.* Rather alarming too, when my escort, on account of a certain clerical style which the guardian of the entrance detects in his mien, is closely questioned, and almost sent away, on suspicion of being one of the tabooed. However, we vow that he has never preached a sermon, and go in. Rather a shocking regulation, *certainly*; the reason given being that no sectarian principles are to be inculcated within these walls.

And now we climb to the roof, where we nearly blow away. It is all marble like the rest, and must be terribly heavy even for those mighty columns below. From it one can see all Philadelphia, and more too. On our way up, in the midst of the stone steps, lay a bird on its breast, head drooping, legs sprawling, wings thrown back, seemingly dead. We pity it, and try to turn it over. As we touch it, it flutters, chirps, and flies away singing, as good as new. A mysterious bird, if ever there was one. Its motive in shamming thus cannot be guessed at. We looked for it again as we came down, but it was not to be seen. So we bade good-by to the great columns and the mighty steps, and to the statue of the old man standing over his tomb, and went away through the garden into the street without.

But I am growing tedious, and you may not care for all this; nor to hear that Fairmount Park is very lovely, and that its beautiful hill gives it one great advantage—not that we admit it will ever rival the Park of the city of my adoption; but I have no doubt that M. F., with whom I walked there, draws much inspiration from it, for it is a place to dream and think in, and to write books in, of which the characters are as good and pure as those of hers. And so adieu.

Yours truly, MARY KYLE DALLAS.

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"And Away Went the Swaggering Man."

A correspondent of the *Evening Post*, writing from Lake George, says that in returning from a walk, he passed by the house of an old settler, long since dead, of whom the following anecdote is related:

"In the course of the 'Old French War,' he was once captured by the Indians. Like Hamlet's Yorick, he was a fellow of a comic turn, and of infinite humor, and as strong and athletic at least as the shorn Samson. And as with Samson, the Philistines into whose hands he fell, would fain, from day to day, bring him forth to make them sport. He sang capital songs, among which was one called 'The Swaggering Man,' each verse ending,

'And away went the swaggering man.'

"This was a favorite song with his captors, and they urged him repeatedly to sing it, which he very cheerfully did, for he was as full of fun as any of them—insisting, however, that they must enlarge their circle, and give him space "to act the part." And this he did to admiration—at least in one instance. Having by his conduct allayed all suspicion of sinister intentions, and induced his guards to give him ample room wherein to exercise his limbs while singing their favorite song, as he rang the last line,

'And away went the swaggering man,'

suiting the action to the words, he sprang from the circle with the leap of a panther, and bounded away with a fleetness that distanced pursuit, and gained his liberty."

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[From the Bedford County (Penn.) Press.]

To the Girls.

We have lately seen it stated that in one town four girls were married at the same hour, about eighteen months ago. Two of them have separated from their husbands, and the other two are trying for divorces. Such things ought to wake up the girls to a sense of their danger. Girls talk and laugh about marriage as though it was a jubilee, a jolly, gladsome thing, a rose without a thorn. And so it is, if it is all right, if they go about it as rational beings, instead of merry-making children. It is a serious thing to marry. It is a life business, and that of heart and happiness. Therefore never do it in haste; never run away to get married; never steal a marriage; never marry for wealth, or standing, or fine person, or manners, but only for character, for worth, for the qualities of mind and heart which make an honorable man. Take time, think long and well before you accept any proposal; consult your parents, then some judicious friend, then your own judgment. Learn all it is possible for you to learn of your proposed husband; when all doubts have been removed, and not till then, accept him.

THE MIDNIGHT GUEST.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

"It is better so." 'Twas a woman's moan,
Full of stifled tears. Where the lamplight shone
Through a vine-clad window, its ruddy glare
Made a lane of light in the sweet dark air,
For the rose that laughed in the sun all day,
Dewy-laden hung in the yellow ray,
Where the tall white lilies shone out like stars,
And the very gate seemed of golden bars.

Weary, weak and wan, like a hopeless shade,
Starting oft, as though of the winds afraid,
Like a spectre born of the solemn Night,
A woman stood in the lane of light.
Her unfastened hair in the dew-fall shone,
And her face was set, like a face of stone,
As she muttered o'er, turning still to go,
"It is better so, darling, better so."

Then out into shadow and darkness fled,
While the summer night soft and silent sped
Till the lamps were out, and the late moonlight
Came to midnight mass in his stole of white,
Bidding shadows kneel and their sins confess,
Laying on white hands like a priest to bless,
Touching light the dew on the shining spray
Of the censers swung by the lily's sway.

From the tree-top down came the silver glow,
Till it found a blotch on the summer snow—
Found a human life, hither brought to wait
For the hap and chance of a rich man's gate.
What remembered wrongs, what foreboding woe
From a cruel world, made it "better so?"
That a lonely waif in its wrapping stirred,
With a sadder cry than a homesick bird?

Till the childless man from his slumber woke,
As the baby's cry through the silence broke.
Ere the slippered feet and the lamp alight
Through the door-way came to the haunted night,
Came a rushing shape, sounded sweet and low
Little senseless words such as mothers know,
As the baby crept to its mother's breast,
While she murmured softly, "Nay, this is best."

As the oaken door-way was opened wide,
Eager faces questioned on either side,
But the sweet dark air of the night was still,
As the swift feet sped o'er the dewy hill,
And the kindly heart never knew at all
How the air was stirred by the feeble call,
Nor knew how near, in its robe of white,
A childish presence had crept that night.

THE BLACK DOCTOR;

OR, THE

Prophecy of the Voodoo King.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE SPANISH RULE IN LOUISIANA.

By WILLIAM HENRY PECK,
Professor of History in the University of the State of Louisiana.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ADRASTE SCIPIAN ACCUSES.

In hurling the Voodoo cane from her, Madame Varlville sprang to her feet.

Having thus hurled it with both hands, with all her strength, so that the cane struck the wall heavily, Madame Varlville clasped her hands upon her forehead, shrieked again and again, and then sank back into her chair apparently as lifeless as a corpse.

Adraste Scipian, amazed by what he could not understand, was speechless and motionless.

Mercita sprang to her feet, and flew to aid her mistress.

But Madame Varlville started into energetic life as suddenly as life had seemed for an instant to have deserted her.

"Back, Mercita!" she exclaimed, sitting as erect in her chair as a queen on her throne. "I need no help. I have given vent to a sorrow that has been pent up in my soul for years. You there! you! Voodoo doctor! priest! Adraste Scipian! I had a son once. Years ago, when he was but a little boy, he was killed yonder in that barbarous country of you blacks! killed by a Voodoo king—by Okee-obi-oki—accursed name!" she added, with the fierceness of a mad woman, and shaking her clenched hands toward the ceiling, and, to the amazement of Mercita, uttering a most terrible malediction upon the name of the Voodoo king.

"He—that Okee-obi-oki—slew my son—with that cane he did it!" continued Madame Varlville. "Yes—he—that savage, and his brother monsters—with that cane, Adraste Scipian—it has the name of the Voodoo wretch carved on it—I saw my husband carve it on that cane—and his own, and mine—and the year in which it was, all cut on that cane—and all is there on the cane now—all that has not been cut or battered off—more than ten times enough to convince me that that is the club with which the savages slew my boy. They killed my boy with that cane, a few days after my husband had carved the names on it; and your countryman—that fiend Okee-obi-oki—boasted to my husband, that with that cane he slew my boy."

Thus disjointedly, and with a vehemence totally foreign to that cold, haughty and severely serene character for which Madame Varlville was distinguished, did the grief-frenzied lady volley her words at Adraste Scipian.

The recognition and the touch of the serpentine club by which she believed her only son had been slain, excited her brain almost to madness.

Perhaps the firm and haughty command with which the stately old lady had ever well ruled the natural vehemence of her nature, would not have been so shaken, even by this painful recognition, had not her nerves and strength of will been much enfeebled by the effects of that poison from which she had nearly died.

She continued to speak to Adraste Scipian rapidly, disjointedly and almost incoherently.

He, as motionless as a statue of black marble, held his eyes fixed upon the cane as it remained on the floor, where it had fallen; his attitude that of humble respect.

Mercita, standing aloof, also remained silent, but with her eyes fixed upon the Voodoo doctor.

She was saying to herself:

"Who is this negro, and where did he obtain that cane?—which I know once belonged to Captain Sancho Perez!"

At length Madame Varlville gave Adraste Scipian an opportunity to reply by demanding where he had obtained the cane.

"Madame," he said, bowing amid the jingling of his bells, "I obtained the cane from Okee-obi-oki—when I killed him."

"You killed that treacherous monster!"

"Yes, Madame. In my own country I was a chief," continued Adraste Scipian. "My tribe was one of those with which Okee-obi-oki waged war. I am an old man now. I was in my youth then. Some thirty years ago, my tribe overcame that of Okee-obi-oki, and with my own hand I killed him. All that was his became mine. His body I gave to such of my tribe as ate human flesh. I was never a cannibal. His cane, a famous one in all that region, I kept. A year after that event, I and others of my tribe were captured by white slave-traders. It was my fate to be made the slave of a Spanish botanist. I was his slave for many years, during which I was with my master in many countries of the world. He taught me to master many languages. He was my teacher in many sciences. He treated me as a friend and an equal. When he died he left me my own master. But a black man is but a negro, let him go where he may. You have no faith in that which you, Madame, term Voodooism. The black man has. The whites scorn it. The blacks revere it. It is the pith of the religious faith of all the negro tribes of Africa. A negro doctor, though he be ever so learned, has no chance as a rival of your learned white doctors. A sick negro, who does not believe in Voodooism, will not ask the aid of a negro doctor, when he can obtain the aid of a white doctor. But if he does have faith in Voodooism, he will have faith only in the aid of a Voodoo doctor. I could obtain no practice among the whites as a physician. They laugh in scorn at the medical skill of a negro doctor. I could obtain no practice among the blacks as a simple physician. Nearly all have faith in Voodooism. Therefore I practice only as a Voodoo doctor, and among the blacks; though, Madame, you must now be convinced that Adraste Scipian is even more learned as a physician than those four great white doctors who said you were dead five days ago."

"I did not ask of you any boasting of your medical skill, Adraste Scipian," said Madame Varlville, who had in a great degree regained her usual coolness while Scipian was speaking. "I am satisfied that you, aside from your Voodoo juggleries, which I despise, have great medical skill. But I spoke of that cane. If ever you again enter my presence, or my house, see that the cane is not with you. You say that you slew the wretch to whom it once belonged, and that assertion, which I have no reason to disbelieve, causes me to regard you with even more consideration than I did when I learned that you had saved my life."

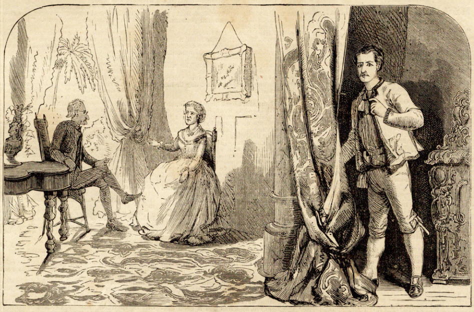
"My bolt went true to the mark," thought Adraste Scipian, who, as the reader knows, had invented, on the spur of the moment, all that he had said of the cane.

"But," continued Madame Varlville, "have you had the cane with you ever since the death of Okee-obi-oki?"

"No, Madame. Some twelve years ago—a little more than twelve years ago, in fact," replied the wary Adraste Scipian, bowing—"it was stolen from me while I was in Havana, and I did not recover it for a year or more. The thief was also a Voodoo doctor, who doubtless recognized it as the sceptre staff of the famous African king, Okee-obi-oki. The thief's name was Syphaxo, and he belonged to a man once well known in Cuba, and perhaps in New Orleans—to Captain Sancho Perez."

"Ah!" thought Mercita, relieved in mind. "It was while the cane was stolen that I saw it on the *Doubloon*."

Madame Varlville did not remember at the moment that Perez was the name of the man from whom she had purchased Mercita. Twelve years had passed since Sancho Perez used to sell negroes in New Orleans, and his name had been forgotten.



LEON DE VARGAS LISTENING TO THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN MADAME VARLVILLE AND HER LAWYER.

Besides, the mind of Madame Varlville was still upon the Voodoo cane.

"Mercita," she said, "it is about twelve years since I purchased you from a man whose name I have forgotten."

"Yes, Madame."

"Do you remember," asked Madame Varlville, "that not long after you became my servant, I, knowing your skill with the pencil, told you to teach my grandsons the art, and that one day you gave them a picture of that cane to sketch?"

Mercita had forgotten, till this question was asked, the fact. She remembered it now.

"Yes, Madame, I remember," she replied.

"And that I afterward asked you where you had ever seen such a cane?"

"Yes, Madame."

"I remember your reply, Mercita. What was it?"

"I said, Madame, that which was true," answered Mercita: "that I saw a cane like the sketch, in the cabin of the vessel in which I was brought from Havana. That cane," and Mercita indicated the Voodoo cane, "is the same, Madame."

"I have no doubt of it," remarked Madame Varlville. "Your sketch of the cane even had that name, or a part of that name, drawn on the cane. What did I command you to do?"

"Never again to make such a sketch, Madame."

"True; and now you know why I so commanded," said Madame Varlville. "I was seen by no one when I first saw your drawing of the cane. My grandsons had left it with other sketches in my room, for my inspection. I cried out in terror and dismay when I saw it. You now know why. It was a perfect picture of the Voodoo staff with which my boy was murdered by the black savages of the Afric coast."

"It is well that I did not say," thought Adraste Scipian, "that the cane had never left my possession."

"And, Mercita," continued Madame Varlville, "what was the name of the trader from whom— Stop! I have it—Perez—ah, the name you just mentioned, Adraste Scipian! Sancho Perez."

"Yes, Madame," replied Scipian, secretly exulting in not being detected in his falsehood, and in the chance evidence of his story. "If she," a gesture of respect toward Mercita, "was in a vessel that belonged to Captain Sancho Perez, twelve years ago, it is quite probable that she saw the cane then, as I have had the honor to tell Madame that at about that time it was in the possession of one of the slaves of Captain Perez."

"Go to your affairs, Mercita," said Madame Varlville, using her usual tone of calm command. "I will ring if I need you. I wish to speak more to Adraste Scipian."

Mercita obeyed.

"Adraste Scipian," said Madame Varlville, very gravely, "you have made a terrible charge against Mercita."

"Madame, I have said that I believe Mercita to be the poisoner," replied Scipian, bowing.

"There is no reason in the world to cause me to suspect Mercita."

"Madame, it was not in her *room* that I found this vial of the poison of which I know you and old Media partook. When I was called in at your sudden illness, Mercita brushed by me in your bedroom, and I detected that she had slipped into one of my pockets behind—where I never carry medicines—a vial. I know that she did it. I was perfectly conscious of it at the time. I did not permit her nor any one else to perceive that I was conscious of the fact; but in a moment after I seized an opportunity to examine what I knew she, and no one else, had put into that pocket. Madame, I already had ascertained that you were suffering from the effects of a certain poison which, in this vial, had been stolen from my chest. Madame, my pocket was empty when I entered that room. It was empty up to that instant when I perceived that Mercita had slipped something into it, trusting that the looseness of my cassock and the force with which she brushed against me would prevent my perception of the fact. Madame, this is what Mercita slipped into that pocket—my stolen vial of poison—the poison that nearly killed you, and did kill Media."

"Good Heaven! This must go before the judges!"

"No, Madame. I will not testify before the judges, as I do now before Madame Varlville," replied Scipian firmly.

"Then you are a villain, Adraste Scipian! Or is this some scheme of negro revenge against Mercita, who may have offended you?"

"Madame, I never saw Mercita until the hour I was called in. Madame, the reason why I will not testify before the white judges is this: they would condemn Mercita to be burned alive."

"True, the law of the Spanish slave code decrees as punishment, for poisoning of their owners by slaves, the stake and the fagot," remarked Madame Varlville, shuddering.

"And if not condemned to death at the stake, Madame," continued Scipian, "she would be condemned to be hanged. And, Madame, I am a negro. I have sworn by all that I hold sacred, never to cause the death of one of my race. Besides, Madame, were my evidence to convict Mercita, I should be viewed as a traitor to my race and color by all the negroes. Some of them, instigated by rival Voodoo doctors, would assassinate me. My life would not be safe a moment. My practice, if my life were spared, would be ruined. I should be forced to fly the country. And Madame has promised me not to place this matter before the judges."

"Yes, I have. And I will not break my promise, Adraste Scipian. Yet, if the crime be hers, she should be punished. But I can conceive of no reason why Mercita should be guilty. I have ever treated her more as a friend than as a servant. She has been my housekeeper, my faithful servant for twelve years, Adraste Scipian. Never once, not even in the most trivial act, has she offended me; nor in any, so far as I know, have I offended her."

"Yet, Madame, she is the criminal. That fact is as plain to me as the light of the sun. I cannot say that she stole this vial from my hut in the swamp; but the vial was stolen from that hut. I had but two vials of this peculiar poison. Perhaps in all the world but these two vials of such rare poison were, or are in existence. Certainly only these two are in existence in Louisiana. Both were in my chest three days before your illness. Your illness was certainly caused by this poison. I perceived that Mercita slipped something into my pocket. That something I immediately find to be the stolen vial. The old woman Media entered the room. She was an aged woman, and the wife of Priam, your slave—a famous negro Voodoo doctor. Media may have been acquainted in her own country with the peculiar effects of this poison. Certainly she suspected something, from her declaration that you had been Voodooed. Mercita says that Media ate of the confection, and that she died almost immediately after. But Mercita did not tell that which I now do, Madame."

"What, Scipian?"

"That she gave the confection herself to Media, Madame."

"Indeed!"

"Madame has only to inquire as to that, of her servants."

"It is not possible that Mercita wished to kill me and both of my grandsons, and, afraid of what old Media might be the means of discovery, then poisoned the old woman!"

"Madame, when one begins a crime, he does not halt to spare. The death of only one of your grandsons may have been the intention of the poisoner. How do we know that Mercita did not know that Master Leon had gone to Mobile, and would not be home on the night of the first, to partake of his customary refreshment?"

"Toward what supposition are you tending, Adraste Scipian?" demanded Madame Varlville, frowning.

But the frown was only to conceal a dread that again suddenly sprang up in her heart.

"We must seek for a cause for this poisoning, Madame."

"Certainly."

"And as it does not seem possible, as yet, that Mercita had any reason to desire to poison a whole family, let us see if she could have any desire to poison any one member of that family," replied Scipian humbly. "Madame, there are two reasons why I, Adraste Scipian, will not testify in this matter before the judges. One you have heard—I mean, Madame, that which refers to my own safety."

"And the other, Adraste Scipian?" demanded Madame Varlville, pressing both of her hands upon her heart, as if to still its tumultuous throbbing.

"The other, Madame," replied Scipian, bowing nearly to the floor, "is the honor of a noble family."

"Speak, Adraste Scipian!" commanded the lady, in a cold and haughty voice.

"Ah, Madame, I am but a negro—"

"Speak, sir!"

"Madame will not repeat my words to any one? Madame will protect me?"

"I will protect you, Adraste Scipian," replied Madame Varlville, almost in a whisper. "The honor of what noble family is concerned in this dreadful affair?"

"Your family, Madame."

"Ah!"

The single ejaculation sounded like a hiss from the set teeth of Madame Varlville. It was that keen, sibilant sound that a patient utters when the probe of a surgeon enters a tender wound.

"*Grand Ciel!* I had begun to suspect!" moaned Madame Varlville, closing her eyes and shuddering.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TWO COUSINS.

We must now speak of Leon de Vargas and Adrian Dudley, the grandsons of Madame Varlville.

The cousins were the sons, each an only child, of the twin daughters of Madame Varlville. The names of their mothers were Leontine and Antoinette. Leontine wedded Don Amigo de Vargas, a Spanish gentleman; and Antoinette wedded Col. Herbert Dudley, once an English officer and afterward a merchant of Louisiana.

At the date of our story, 1796, Leon and Adrian were orphans; young men of about twenty-one years, and living with their grandmother.

In person they were in many respects alike. In character they were very dissimilar. Each was handsome in face and form, and both had many of the facial beauties of their mothers, who had been ladies of great loveliness.

A bitter hatred existed between Don de Vargas and Col. Dudley long before they married the daughters of Madame Varlville. This hatred twice culminated in a duel between the Spaniard and the Englishman. The first duel was fought before they became the husbands of the twin sisters, and in this combat both combatants were severely wounded.

Madame Varlville, then a widow, for Dr. Varlville died about five years before her daughters became acquainted with De Vargas and Dudley, was bitterly opposed to the marriage of either of her daughters to either of the above gentlemen. Aware of the deep hatred of each suitor toward the other, she could foresee only strife and feud between her children, were they to become the wives of these two foes.

But Leontine was passionately in love with Don Vargas, while at the same time Antoinette as devotedly loved Col. Dudley; and the wise warning of their mother fell upon heedless ears.

Ere they became wives Leontine had learned to hate Dudley, the foe of her lover; and the same was the sentiment of her sister Antoinette toward De Vargas, the foe of her lover, Col. Dudley.

"If you wed these men," was the warning of the mother, "it will not be long before you hate each other as bitterly as they now hate each other. I forbid."

Don Vargas asked of Madame Varlville the hand of her daughter Leontine. She bade him never again visit her house.

Then Don Vargas accused Col. Dudley of having prejudiced the mind of Madame Varlville against him. Col. Dudley bluntly told him that he lied.

Then was fought their first duel, in which both were severely wounded.

After that Madame Varlville sent word to Colonel Dudley that neither was he ever to enter her house again.

But as soon as the two recovered from their wounds they eloped, by preconcerted arrangement with each other, with the twin daughters of Madame Varlville.

This was the only occasion—the double elopement—on which Don Vargas and Colonel Dudley ever acted as friends, and this alliance lasted only such time as was necessary to carry off the twin sisters; who eloped with their lovers on the same night, at the same hour, and were married at the same altar.

Even as they left the altar, each with his bride on his arm, Don Vargas whispered to Colonel Dudley:

"We are, of course, enemies as before."

"Certainly," was the reply of Col. Dudley. "The cause for our truce no longer exists."

Madame Varlville was greatly shocked and deeply mortified by this unfilial act of her daughters; but she was wise, and having pardoned the brides, strove to make the bridegrooms friends to each other.

She failed. The Spaniard was more vindictive than noble; the Englishman was more stubborn than sensible.

The feud continued. Don Vargas took his bride to his dwelling, which was on the other side of the Mississippi, in that suburb of New Orleans now called Algiers; while Colonel Dudley carried his bride to his house on a plantation where the suburb Jeffersonville now is.

The deep and broad Mississippi ever rolling like a sea between these two homes, was not deeper nor wider than the hate that existed between Vargas and Dudley; nor was the water of that great river ever colder and darker than the antipathy which soon sprang up to imbitter the hearts of Leontine and Antoinette against each other.

Four years elapsed after this double marriage, and during this time a son was born to Leontine, and a son to Antoinette. The first named hers after herself, Leon; the second named hers after her father, Adrian Henri.

The cousins were born within a week of each other.

But Madame Varlville never once visited the homes of her daughters, though for a time they visited her.

Their enmity to each other incensed her; their hates and bickerings vexed her, until she said one day, in a moment of anger:

"I wish to see neither of you again, deeply as I love you, until I shall see you reject the hates of your husbands, and coming to me as you were until you married—two loving and devotedly attached sisters. I do not say that you must reconcile your husbands to each other before you visit me again—let them hate each other if it pleases them! But there is no reason why you two, sisters born hand in hand, one not a minute older than the other, should quarrel as you do. You vex, you worry my very life out of my heart. Leave me, and never return until you come with your arms around each other's necks, and lip to lip, as you used to do!"

A year passed after these words were spoken by the justly indignant mother, who little thought then that her daughters were never again to enter her house, and then was fought the second and last duel of Vargas and Dudley, a duel in which both perished on the field at the first fire.

Each wife had literally worshipped her husband, and within a week after the fatal duel both Leontine and Antoinette were in their graves.

The loss of their parents left the infant cousins dependent upon the love and care of their grandmother, and her stricken heart gladly received them into her home, the Varlville mansion.

They were not two years old at the death of their parents, and as they grew from childhood to youth, were pronounced very much alike. Yet the cousins, though so much alike at first glance, had many points of dissimilarity when examined closely. Adrian had inherited the clear complexion of his English father, and the black hair and blue eyes of his French-American mother. Leon had inherited the restless coal-black eyes and sallow complexion of his Spanish father, and a combination of the haughty, crafty, and reserved expression of that parent's face, with the beauty of outline which had belonged alike to the persons of his mother and his aunt Antoinette Dudley.

Adrian was impetuous, unreflective, generous and courageous, and by nature of a fiery and headstrong temperament, which often, in his childhood, defied stern control, and yet yielded ever instantly to softer ruling.

Leon, proud, reserved, deliberative and cunning, was of that kind of boys who grow to be cold, cruel, crafty and hard-hearted men, deceitful of face, tumultuous of heart and brain, and reckless of right or wrong in their souls, while their lips smile and lie.

Were any given point to be attained, Adrian would dash at it with all his speed and strength, reckless of rule or obstacle that might menace his welfare, and yet never taking an unfair advantage.

Leon fought to obtain any desired end as a man gropes in total darkness, with a fear lest sudden light may reveal to others how and for what he works.

The heart and brain of Adrian were in combat like two fists of steel.

The heart and brain of Leon, in attack or flight, were like the nose and feet of a fox.

They were about ten years old when Madame Varlville purchased Mercita from Sancho Perez. From their earliest childhood there had been no brotherly, nor even cousinly friendship between them.

Madame Varlville, wisely regarding their future, had vigilantly kept from their knowledge everything connected with the feud that had existed between their respective parents. She menaced all her household, and all her numerous slaves of her plantations, with her severe displeasure, if any should ever dare to reveal to the cousins the sad history of their parents. She threatened that she would sell the offender; and to be sold from the kind and motherly ownership of Madame Ruth Varlville was something more dreaded by all her slaves than any other punishment in her power to inflict upon them. We have heard her say to Sancho Perez, at the purchase of Mercita, "I have never sold one of my servants. If one were to become very unruly, or to commit a great crime, I might then sell the offender."

Therefore for Madame Varlville to say to one of her slaves, "Offend in this, and I will sell you," was to the heart and head of that slave as if some one who never broke a threat had said to him, "Offend in this, and I will blow your brains out."

We may believe, then, that the cousins never learned from any of their grandmother's slaves that they were the sons of two men whose hatred of each other ended on earth only by each descending into the grave as the assassin of the other.

Madame Varlville, while the cousins were infants, had intimated to all who were acquainted with her, that she should view with scorn and dislike any person that should make known to the children, as they grew up, the facts of the fearful tragedy which had made them orphans.

She was profoundly respected for the nobleness of her character; and in addition to this, she was immensely rich and influential. Her unexpressed wishes were eagerly anticipated. Her expressed desires were as revered as the commands of a queen, in the society in which she moved.

Thus the cousins grew toward manhood in total ignorance of the feud and fate of their fathers.

Yet in their hearts they hated each other, but the sentiment was scarcely hate in that of Adrian, but more a passive kind of dislike, distrust, aversion and contempt for Leon's secret character.

Boys understand and read each other's character by instinct. After experience may soften their instinctive antipathies, but the antipathy, vailed by the amenities of society, is in the heart and memory of the boy when he has grown to be a man.

Long ere either could understand the meaning of the word antipathy, each cousin had said to himself:

"I don't like my cousin, and I know he does not like me. I am glad he does not like me, and I hope I shall never like him. But I do not know why he hates me, nor why I hate him; and I do not wish him or any one to know that I hate him, or that I know he hates me."

This in the language of boys, which is generally squarely to the point. As the boys grew older they expressed the same instinctive dislike, or rather smouldering hatred, in different style, thus:

ADRIAN—to himself—"Leon has a secret nature which is very bad and black. He tries to conceal that nature, and succeeds very well, so far as the world is concerned. He does not try to crush his secret bad nature. I do not believe he could, if he were to try. There is a masked devil in his heart. Some day, I know, that masked devil will leap at my throat."

LEON—to himself—"Adrian has instincts with which I cannot fraternize. I suppose there are those who would call those instincts noble. Well, I hate him, and I hate his way of lording his frankness over what he calls my slyness. Every one, grandmother not excepted, secretly likes him. Every one, grandmother not excepted, secretly dislikes me."

Yet each was as eager as the other in trying to conceal this secret antipathy. Adrian was ever in his heart trying to crush out this inherited dislike for his cousin. Of course he failed; for we can no more crush out a deeply rooted antipathy, than we can lift a mountain and toss it across an ocean.

Leon, year by year, day by day, fanned the spark of inherited hate until, despite his secretiveness of emotion, it was perceived by the ever vigilant eyes of Madame Varlville.

Long before the cousins attained the age of manhood she had detected that all her efforts to rear them with the love of brothers for each other were vain. But she still endeavored to instill into their minds at least such esteem and friendship as cousins should entertain for each other. In this she failed. They would treat each other only as acquaintances. Madame Varlville, with her fear of the hatred of their parents ever in her mind, one day said to Adrian:

"My son, why do you treat your cousin as if he were only the guest—and not a welcome one—of your grandmother?"

"Indeed, mother," for so each of the cousins called his grandmother, "I do not know—except that I cannot love, nor even like him."

And to Leon apart, she had said:

"My son, I fear you even hate your cousin."

"Oh, no; I esteem him very highly, mother.

It is he that has all the dislike on his side. I really love Adrian," was the reply of Leon.

Madame Varlville felt that Leon lied. She loved both, but her heart went more toward Adrian than toward Leon. This last fact she strove to conceal. In her efforts to conceal it, she affected to like Leon better than Adrian.

In this she erred. She deceived the frank Adrian; but she did not deceive the cunning Leon.

"I am not deceived," he often said to himself. "Madame Varlville"—in his thoughts he ever thus coldly designated his grandmother—"when about to die, will make a will, by which she will bequeath to Adrian twice as much as she will to me."

From the day he became twenty-one years of age he was vexed in mind by one great question which caused him many a sleepless night. This—"Has Madame Varlville made a will?"

At about the date of our story, that is, a few days before the skill of Adraste Scipian saved the life of Madame Varlville, he became assured that she had made no will, but that she had spoken of the matter to her lawyer, and that it was her intention, when she should make one, to leave her property equally to the cousins.

Had Leon not discovered more than this he might have remained satisfied. But he also overheard—for he was an adroit eavesdropper—Madame Varlville inform her lawyer that in case only one of her grandsons should survive her, all her wealth was to fall to that one.

Yet Madame Varlville, with that remembrance of the hatred of their parents ever in her mind, let it be supposed by all, that at her death the great bulk of her wealth was to go to charitable purposes, and her grandsons to be left each only such property as might maintain him as a gentleman moderately independent.

Upon her lawyer, though she had not yet made perfect her dictated will, she enjoined profound and scrupulous secrecy. The lawyer was a gentleman of rectitude, and did not violate the trust reposed in him. But Leon's keen ears, concealed at the time in a closet of that apartment in which the lawyer and Madame Varlville conversed, heard all.

At the same time he heard his grandmother say to the lawyer:

"I have more fear of the nature and temper of Leon than of those of Adrian. Were Leon ever to learn that his father fell by the hand of Adrian's father— But let us not speak of that. It is too terrible!"

"Madame," Leon heard the lawyer reply, "it happened so long ago, so few witnessed it, that the real truth will never be known by Monsieur Leon de Vargas and his cousin. The two slaves who witnessed the affair are dead, years ago. The matter was hushed up adroitly, twenty years ago. Perhaps only you and I are now alive who know the truth, and you are aware that all we learned was from the lips of those two slaves. They, I am sure, never told that which they told us, to others."

"I am well assured, Monsieur Ralté," was the reply of Madame Varlville to the lawyer, "of that. Saul and Ebon were faithful servants, and it was to me, as you know, that they first told the dreadful tidings of the combat in the swamp. It is, and has been for years believed, I know, that it was an accident. My grandsons believe, and God grant they may ever believe, that their fathers perished by accident in the swamp. Yet I have always a great fear that Leon may discover that his father was killed by Col. Dudley. Saul and Ebon, you remember, stated that they saw a white man, in the garb of a sailor, near the spot just as Col. Dudley fired his pistol—saw the face of the man, but for an instant."

"As that man has never been heard of since," replied Monsieur Ralté, "we may believe that Saul and Ebon were mistaken. No, Madame. I am confident that you and I are now the only persons living who know the facts of the case; and only by some indiscretion of ourselves can Monsieur Leon de Vargas, whose character, I think, is more to be feared than that of Monsieur Adrian Dudley, ever learn that his father was killed by Col. Dudley."

This conversation took place about a week or ten days before the appearance of Adraste Scipian in the Varlville Mansion.

When it had ended, and when Leon was able to escape from his place of concealment unobserved, he left the house as if going to hunt in the woods, but really to commune with himself upon what he had overheard.

He had heard only partially much that we have quoted. He had heard Madame Varlville dictate to the lawyer the main points of her intended will. He knew that she had not signed a will, and that the matter was still in the hands of the lawyer, and that the latter was to again visit Madame Varlville on the 10th of May, at which date she desired to perfect the will. He knew that by the law of succession were Madame Varlville to die intestate, and he remain alone to inherit, all her property would fall to him. He knew that were the will to be made as Madame Varlville had dictated, and Adrian to die before she did, Leon de Vargas was to inherit after Madame Varlville. But, though Adrian were to die before his grandmother, she might either make another will before her death, and deprive him of much of her estate, or live to be a hundred years old, and he remain dependent upon her bounty all that time.

More than all, he had discovered that his father had been killed by the father of his cousin, whom already he hated bitterly.

Brooding over all this, he wandered far into the forests by which New Orleans was then surrounded, until he saw before him, and at a distance of a hundred paces, a man lying flat on the green grass of the moist and spongy soil.

The feet of this man, coarsely shod, were toward Leon when he first perceived that a human form was lying upon the ground. Leon, who had for some minutes been walking very slowly and cautiously, for having discovered freshly made tracks of a deer, he had yielded to the impulse of an ardent hunter—which he was—and putting aside his black thoughts for the time, resolved to shoot game if he could; but on perceiving the recumbent human form he halted.

The man was lying on his breast, his hands supporting his head, and his elbows resting upon the ground.

A second of scrutiny assured Leon that the man was a negro, and that he was gazing fixedly at something on the ground, or that he had fallen asleep in that position.

A movement of the man's feet told Leon that he was not dead, which had been Leon's first thought on seeing the prostrate form.

"It is one of the runaway slaves who hide in the swamp," mused Leon. "At first I thought it was a dead man: but he moved his feet—so he is at least alive, and perhaps asleep, though he may be looking at something which I cannot see from here. I will creep upon the fellow."

As Leon de Vargas was an expert huntsman, and the soil soft and spongy, and the trunks of many trees at hand to aid his cautious approach, he had no difficulty in speedily gaining a position so close to the recumbent man that he could have seized him by the neck from behind had he desired to do so.

But eager first to see what the negro was looking at, if he was not asleep, and was looking at anything, Leon stooped as far forward over him as he dared, and discovered that the man had before him a miniature portrait of a beautiful young lady.

The setting of the miniature was of gold, but not of the style familiar to Leon.

He had scarcely discovered that the recumbent negro was gaping at a portrait in miniature, when the black, without changing his posture, muttered in French, and so loud that Leon readily understood the words:

"Yes, yes! It is Angelique!"

But these words in French might mean either that the portrait was angelically beautiful, or that it was the portrait of a lady named Angelique.

Leon still remained silent and motionless, hoping that the negro might say more aloud, wondering too why this miniature was in the possession of the negro, and admiring with appreciative eyes the splendid beauty of feature and complexion depicted on the little oval shield of ivory.

But the negro continued to mutter, again and again, only those words in French:

"Yes, yes! It is Angelique!"

Leon stepped back a pace, and cocked his musket.

The click of the steel was to the man on the ground like the sting of a scorpion.

He sprang to his feet with the quickness of a startled tiger, and with a howl like the roar of a startled tiger uttered this word:

"*Diablos!*"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

MY LAST HOUSE-HUNTING.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Well, Clara," said Mrs. Litchford, "what luck have *you* had? Fourteen houses I've looked at, and only two out of the lot are eligible. And one of 'em's next door to a livery stable, and the other belongs to an old curmudgeon that won't make a single repair. I declare, it's *too* aggravating!"

Miss Clara Leclair shook her nut-brown curls, and looked seriously at her aunt.

"Let's go to the Rocky Mountains and live in a cave!" said she. "No particular rent—no repairs needed! Or let's travel South, and camp under an orange-tree in Florida!"

"Clara," said Mrs. Litchford querulously, "I wish you *would* be in earnest for once."

"My darling aunty," protested Miss Leclair, "I never was more in earnest in my life."

"*Did* you see any houses that you thought would suit us?"

"Plenty, Aunt Comfort, if only we could pay two or three thousand a year rent. But as to seven hundred—" and Miss Leclair shrugged her shoulders. "There was only one—and that had an incumbrance."

"Where was it?"

"On Lenoir street."

"That's a good locality," said Mrs. Litchford, her faded eyes brightening.

"And the house is in excellent repair, and there is a delightful little green park just round the corner, and the rent is only seven hundred dollars; but—"

"Ah!" sighed Mrs. Litchford, "there's always a *but*."

"The house is owned by a chemist, and he has blown the ceiling off his room twice, and set fire to the woodwork once, and there isn't an Insurance Company in the city will issue a policy on it. And he wants to reserve the whole third story to himself, or else the house would be a thousand dollars."

Mrs. Litchford eyed the fire reflectively.

"As long as there wasn't any harm done in any rooms but his own," she began, in a meditative way, "and there is nothing so *very* disagreeable in the smell of chemicals—and as long, Clara, as we meant to let the upper floor, in any event, if we could— Are the other rooms pleasant?"

"Very, Aunt Comfort. The dearest little parlor you ever saw, with a bay-window to the south, and a library back of it; and in the basement a pretty dining-room, wainscoted in colored woods, a gray marble mantel, and the most convenient kitchen I ever was in."

"And in the second story?"

"There are four bedrooms."

"That would do nicely," said Mrs. Litchford. "We could let two of them and the library to some nice, quiet, desirable boarders, and still retain room enough for ourselves. Does the chemical gentleman object to boarders?"

"Not in the least—if they don't object to *him*, which I should suppose to be the most probable alternative," Miss Leclair answered, laughing. "However, I got the refusal of the house until to-morrow noon, and if you like, Aunty, we'll go around early to-morrow morning and look at it."

"By all means!" eagerly assented Mrs. Litchford. "I like your account of the place very much."

"There's one thing I didn't mention, Aunt Comfort," added Clara Leclair, rather guiltily: "the—the gentleman's name is—Topfield!"

Aunt Litchford opened wide her eyes.

"Not—not Gilbert Topfield, your old lover?"

"Yes, Aunt Comfort," demurely admitted the young lady. "Times have changed, you see; the up is down, and the down is up, and I am not a belle and a beauty any longer, only a sober old maid that gives music lessons for a livelihood—and *he* is rich, you see. However, I don't see what difference that need make in our plans and arrangements."

"Did you see him?" breathlessly demanded Aunt Comfort.

"Yes."

"He knew you, of course?"

"Oh, certainly."

"What did he say?"

Clara shrugged her shoulders.

"What should he say? What would any other gentleman say, on chancing to meet an old—old acquaintance? Simply that he was glad to see me, and hoped my aunt was well."

"It is very strange," said Mrs. Litchford musingly.

"All the world is strange, if you come to that, Aunt Comfort," said Clara, with a little abrupt laugh. "And now I shall be glad of a cup of tea, if you'll give it to me, for I am very tired, and my head aches."

Mrs. Litchford engaged the desirable dwelling-house, No. —, Lenoir street, at a rent of seven hundred dollars a year, with the stipulation that three rooms on the third floor must be reserved for the chemical experiments of her eccentric landlord. Mr. Topfield took down the "To Let," with a sigh of relief.

"This business is over," said he. "And Clara is really very pretty yet."

"My goodness!" said Mrs. Litchford confidentially, to her niece, that same evening, "how old and ugly and bald-headed Gilbert Topfield has grown!"

"Do you think so?" said Miss Leclair. "He has matured certainly, but I never did fancy mere boys."

Mrs. Litchford looked quickly at her niece.

"Oh, Clara," she exclaimed, "wouldn't it be nice if—"

"If what, aunt?"

Mrs. Litchford hesitated an instant, and then finished her sentence in quite a different tone.

"If we could let the library back of the parlor to Mrs. Needham and her sister. It is worth trying for."

Mrs. Litchford and Clara Leclair moved their household goods into the house on Lenoir street, on the afternoon of the thirtieth day of April, and at five o'clock of the same afternoon, as Clara was unpacking her bird-cages, and Mrs. Litchford chanting a pæan of lamentation over the broken spout of a century-old china tea-pot, there was a sound like the report of forty pistols condensed into one. Crash went the tea-pot into a score of pieces on the floor. Clara looked up with a pale, scared face.

"My goodness me! he's been and blown himself up!" shrieked the widow. "Go, Clara! I don't dare to stir."

White and frightened, Clara hastened up into the laboratory of the amateur chemist. The room was full of splintered glass, smoke and ashes. Gilbert Topfield lay on the floor on his face.

"Gilbert! O, Gilbert! you are not dead! Speak just one word for *my* sake—for Clara's sake?" faltered the girl, wildly clasping her hands.

But he neither spoke nor stirred. And Clara began to weep and wring her hands, in a wild, uncertain sort of way; while Aunt Litchford hastened to summon help.

"I might have known this would be the end of it," she bewailed herself. "He will die, and there'll be a funeral; and there will be a blight on the house ever afterward."

Fortunately, however, Mrs. Litchford's words did not come true. Gilbert Topfield lay ill for long weeks, but he did not die. His eyes were bandaged, his face bound up in wrappings, by the order of the physician, and he passed the most of his time in a big easy chair by the window—but he escaped with the boon of life. He was sitting one evening by the casement, as usual. Clara Leclair had been reading to him, but she had ceased now, for the purple tints of twilight were stealing athwart the sky, and she could no longer decipher the characters on the page.

"Clara," Mr. Topfield said abruptly, "what should I have done without you? Oh, Clara, if I were not blind, disfigured, crippled, by my own folly—"

"What then, Gilbert?"

"I should ask you to be my wife," he answered quietly.

She drew near and laid her hand softly on his.

"And if you *do* ask me, Gilbert—blind, disfigured, crippled as you are—I answer that I love *you*, and not the outer casket that you dwell in. Oh, Gilbert, if you had perished, I should have died too!"

And silly little Clara began to cry.

She went away the next day to fulfill a long-promised engagement to play at a concert in a distant city, but Gilbert Topfield made her promise to return as soon as she could.

"For you are mine now, Clara," he said, "And I have the best right to you."

When she came back, Mr. Topfield was in the parlor to meet her—the first day he had come down stairs.

"Gilbert!"

Well might she start back in astonishment. Bandages, fillets and wrappings were all gone; the bowed figure was straightened; the brown eyes shone clear and bright into her own, as he advanced to take the little hands she tremblingly held out.

"You don't know me, little pet! Well, I don't wonder at it. I scarcely know myself. Dr. Penhurst has transformed me, so to speak, and happiness has helped the cure. Dear little Clara, *you* would have married me had I been maimed for life, but none the less do I rejoice that I can be more worthy of you."

So Mrs. Litchford did *not* let the rooms, and Clara Leclair never "moved" again.

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JACK CADE, JOURNEYMAN.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Jack Cade took off his jacket and hung it upon a hook, put on his coat, smoothed his hair with a pocket comb, snatched at his tin kettle, scowled at a stout, well-to-do looking man who was locking up a safe at the end of the shop, and started homeward. He was a big fellow, American to the backbone, and handsome enough to make the girls look at him even in his every-day clothes. He was twenty-eight years old, healthy, earned good wages, had a pretty wife, whom he loved, and who loved him devotedly. He was going home to a good tea, and had had a good dinner. His home was the picture of neatness, and was prettily furnished besides; but he was a discontented man nevertheless, one of a class to be found among journeymen mechanics of all kinds, who are perpetually chafing over some wrong, real or imaginary. The individual spoken of as "The Boss" seems to be the natural born enemy of these men, no matter how promptly he pays their wages, or how liberal those wages are. He represents Capital, *they* represent Labor; and they shake their heads, and say:

"It is always so: Capital against Labor, the world over. Labor is always at a disadvantage; Capital takes advantage of it!"

It is natural to desire to possess capital. I myself could not possibly imagine anything more delightful than unlimited means; but these men never think how much labor may have gone to the accumulation of the capital which pays them their wages: what energy and thought, what hand work and brain work have been called into action, before the "boss" was master instead of "man!" There he stands—a cruel creature who pays them their wages, and is making a fortune out of their toil, and they hate him. They hate all "bosses;" a smouldering animosity is in their blood. They work grudgingly, even if they work well. They are regarded as very sensible men by their comrades, and though contented Tommy Smith is very well suited with the present state of things himself, he understands how wrong it all is, when Jack Cade represents the case to him.

These men are not often the worst in the shop. They are not the hard drinkers, or the idlers; but they are not the best men. They may have ability, but they are too much afraid of helping "capital" to triumph, to do their best while they are journeymen. They do not get on as some do. They never become a master's right-hand man.

Ambition helps a man upward; discontent clogs his feet.

Ambition says, "I'll be master myself some day."

Discontent mutters, "What's the use? Capital holds the reins. Labor must be a slave."

Jack strode home from the shop, with his hands in his pockets and his kettle over his right wrist, his hat tipped over his eyes, and thoughts of his wrongs in his soul. Phebe, his wife, looking out of the window to watch for his coming, said to herself:

"Ah, he's thinking over all those dreadful things. I know he is."

Poor Phebe, had she not loved Jack so, would have been bored to death, in this her first married year, by the recitation of those mysterious wrongs of his class; but what loving woman does not yield a ready sympathy even to woes she cannot comprehend, when they befall the man she loves. When Jack Cade told his wife how Capital crushed Labor, she said it was "a shame," and "real mean." And then there was one thing with which she could sympathize—a tangible trouble: Jack, had he had money enough to purchase what he styled "them machines," could have been a "boss" himself—yes, could have been "capital," instead of "labor," and made a fortune over-hand. Then things would have been as they should be, and it indeed was "real mean," and "a shame." "Them machines," however, were worth two thousand dollars.

Jack Cade had no savings to speak of; and housekeeping swallows ready money in an astonishing way. Jack lived up to his means; dressed as well as he could; liked to see Phebe as fine as possible, and in fact ate his cake and enjoyed it as he went—or would have enjoyed it but for this corroding care, this injury that Capital was ever doing to Labor.

Such a pretty tea table; *such* a smiling wife! Jack would have been worse than he was, not to warm into good-humor when once in his own little dining-room; but with the after-tea smoke came the old complaints—that general difficulty and that particular one.

"Why, I'm more able to carry on a business of that kind than old Trimmer is," said Jack. "Why, you know I am yourself, Kitty."

"*Of course*," said Kitty, with emphasis.

"And here is *he* rolling in gold," said Jack; "and here am *I*, his journeyman—ha, ha!—just because he has them machines and I can't buy 'em—"

"It's awfully mean," said Kitty. "And when you are dressed up for Sunday you look ever so much richer than he does. Oh, how mean it is!"

She cuddled up to her husband as he sat on the sofa, as she said this, and he put his arm about her waist; but she was thinking only of him—he of those things that were so very wrong, even while he thought what a dear little soul she was.

After a while he went to bed and went to sleep, and the lights were out and the room still for a while; but after some time Phebe, who had not closed her eyes, crept out upon the carpet, wrapped herself in her dressing-gown, and tiptoeing into her parlor, shut the door. She wanted to think, and she drew her chair before the dying grate fire and looked into the embers. There were pictures there to her—pictures of the past: of a little girl in a white dress sitting on an old man's knee; of a mill, the great wheel whirling and the water dripping below; of the mill-pond, clear as a mirror, reflecting the trees and the sky, and her own little face.

"Grandpa always loved me," she said to herself; "always loved me very much. I'm sure I loved him; I love him still. I reckon he's just as fond of me. Why can't we be little girls and stay with our grandpas, and yet be big girls and marry too? Dear old grandpa, I never was a bit afraid of you then; why should I be now?"

Then she sat and looked at the pictures in the fire a little longer. They burnt red amid black gorges, mountains and valleys, trees and rivers, the whole old country place—the mill and the miller, and his little granddaughter. She could see his white hair, his deep-set blue eyes; she saw him as he looked after her on her wedding-day, as she drove away with her husband.

"I'll do it," she whispered to herself, as she crept back to bed again, and went to sleep with a tear or two on her cheeks. "I'll do it. Grandpa always loved me."

Jack Cade went to his work next morning comfortably fed and well kissed, but all his trouble returned when his eyes fell upon the man of capital.

When Mr. Trimmer said cheerfully, "How are *you* this morning, Cade?" Jack muttered an ungracious "um," that might have meant well or ill, and made no return of the politeness. Mr. Trimmer whistled a tune as he unlocked his desk. Cade said to himself that "Capital was insolently triumphant."

Just then Phebe was posting a letter that she had written to her grandfather, the miller—a letter that was thought over as she watched the pictures in the fire the night before.

It was a hard letter to write, but a wife will always sacrifice her feelings for her husband, if she really loves him. And Phebe set to work to get her dinner with a feeling of relief. Perhaps some good would be brought about by this that she had done, and Jack would call her blessed.

Jealous Jack came home to dinner as jealous of capital as ever. The "boss" had a great contract. *He* would make thousands by it. What would Jack make? His wages; no more.

"And why?" asked Jack. "Why, because he's got capital and them machines, and I an't. I'm a better workman, and he knows it too; and I shall do the work, and he won't; but look at the difference."

"It's very mean," said Phebe, "but may be some day there'll be an improvement."

Jack shook his head.

"*I* belong to the laboring classes," he said. "Capital will always crush me." And so went back to work.

Of course Jack now and then forgot to descant upon his wrongs. He could laugh and joke. He took Phebe to see a play, and went with her to spend an evening somewhere very often. He liked to see her dressed in her new attire, as she stood all ready to go to church. He went to church also, and thought himself a tolerable Christian; but Mr. Trimmer came in his carriage, which was hard to bear, and interfered with his devotions. On the whole, Tommy Smith was happier, though he could not see into things as Cade did.

Jack had good points too. He loved Phebe, and did his best for her. He had been a kind and dutiful son to his parents. He was charitable to the poor, and the first to head a subscription for a disabled fellow-workman. Anything beneath him, or dependent on him, Jack was tender of; but anything above him he hated. There was his failing.

Days glided on without much change, and nothing happened worth recording in the little household for some time; but at last Jack sat one night before his fire watching the pictures, as Phebe had two months before, and was conscious of a new trouble. Its first dawning had been so vague, that it had hardly troubled him.

Phebe had had letters that she had hidden from him—women's talk from her sister, no doubt—but she had always been so open before. Phebe had been out secretly, and had fibbed about it. That was worse. Phebe had something on her mind, and a secret look in her eyes. "By Heaven, if I thought I had any cause I'd—I'd—I'd—" stammered Jack aloud. Then he started to his feet and understood himself. He was jealous—jealous of Phebe.

He did not realize the fact that his nature was a jealous one, and that he had only waited for a chance to develop this feeling, as a kitten waits for the first mouse to show her proclivity for rat-catching. All he knew was that he felt horribly, and doubted his wife.

"It's the third time she's been out at noon," he said. "And she'll come in in a flutter, and all dressed, as she did last time, and she'll evade my questions. I'll watch her; I'll follow her—I'll—" He struck his hand against the mantel-piece instead of finishing the sentence. A pretty china vase toppled over and smashed into glittering pieces on the fender, and just then a voice cried from the back room:

"Dear me, Jack; home before me? I've been to get some oranges."

There was Mrs. Cade, smiling and bright, dressed in her new silk, with six oranges in a little fancy basket.

Jack scowled at her. She never marketed at noon in her best silk, he knew that, and though she slipped it off and put on a calico wrapper, and dished his dinner all hot from the oven, he spoke no word. Phebe thought the old wrongs were heavy on him, and had her own thoughts. But for the first time in their married life he left her without kissing her, when the meal was done. That set her to crying.

Jack went back to his work in a strange state of mind. At the next bench worked Tommy Smith. Tommy was all in a grin.

"Boss has had a caller," whispered Tommy. "A young gal. She stayed in his office quite a spell. He's gettin' gay in his old-age, is Boss. Wonder whether he's goin' to marry a second?"

Jack did not condescend to reply.

"She's come here before," said Tom, "always at noon, when the men is mostly home; I eat here, you know. She's awful pooty—black hair and eyes, and one o' them silks the color o' stewed prunes, with flounces on it kinder scalloped."

"Eh?" cried Jack.

"Oh, I take notice of the gals," said Tommy. "*I'm* a bachelor; not an old married man, like *you*."

"Stag one," yelled Jack, in a mysterious fury—mysterious to Tommy at least.

Then he lowered his voice again.

"How did she wear her hair?" he asked. "Come, *you* know all about girls. How did she fix her hair?"

"Two braids, and curls between 'em," said Tommy, grinning; "and a ribbon like her dress, and a hat with a black feather, and earrings that was like little tombstones—the things a top, I mean—urns, you know, black jet. And a bag she had, a ridicule, you know, with these here Johnny jump-ups painted outside on the leather. Yes, and a parasol with a handle like a horse's foot with a shoe onto it. I'm as good as a fashion book."

"You're a great deal better," said Jack, black to the eyebrows. "You tell things fashion books don't tell. So she came to see Trimmer, did she?"

"Yes," said Tommy; "and he kissed her."

Jack gave a roar. He had dashed a knife that he was using into his hand instead of the wood; but it was not the pain that made him yell; *that* he did not feel. However, Tommy did not know it. The blood was gushing from the wound.

"Give us a hold. Let's tie it up. You hadn't ought to let it bleed so," cried the ignoramus who had just described Jack's wife to him; but Jack paced the shop floor muttering oaths between his teeth until, faint with loss of blood, he began to comprehend the necessity of "going to the doctor," which had been urged upon him by all present for some time.

It was a bad cut, and Jack had an excuse for going home for a day or so. And to Phebe the wound was excuse enough for his alternate rage and gloom.

She was frightened at first, and pitiful afterward; but Jack watched her as a tiger watches its prey; and when, at half past five, he saw her put on her pretty best dress, and make herself ready to go out, he said nothing. He nodded good-bye to her, when she called to him from the door that she was going out for a while, and seemed to be half asleep; but five minutes after he was on her track. He saw her turn the corner, and followed her with a foreknowledge of her destination which he vainly strove to strangle. Block by block, as she neared the place, he kept at the same distance from her. She had the step and movements of a good woman, of a pure woman. *All* men know the difference; and some women. Her face was as pure as a child's; but Jack Cade was fast coming to a belief that his wife was neither pure nor good.

"Trifles light as air are, to the jealous,
Confirmation strong as proofs of Holy Writ."

He had a host of little trifles added into one awful sum which this watch was set to prove.

At last he was right. She came to the shop—his shop. She opened the door, and entered. He hurried on and pressed his face against the glass of a little corner window. The men had gone home, but Trimmer himself was there. He came forward and shook her hands—yes, and patted her on the back, and led her into his office. In a moment more, as Jack was preparing to rush in and murder him, they came out together, and he, Trimmer, squeezed her hand this time, and smiled upon her as she tripped out, shutting her reticule clasps close, as though it held some precious contents.

Trimmer, though a great deal older than Jack, was not an old man, and he was very fine looking—gallant in his way to women too. Such a fury of jealousy as burnt in Jack's veins now I have no words for. He crept into the shop and took the strong, sharp knife that had given him that wound the day before, from the table where it lay, and put it in his bosom, and stole out again while Trimmer was locking up his office desk. He had heard of these things before, Jack Cade said to himself, as he felt the handle of the knife under his vest. Capital found beauty in the home of Labor, and won away her virtue. That she had hidden the fact that she knew Trimmer was enough to prove her guilty. Could it be that such woe and shame had come to him? He knew it was in the world, but never guessed it had knocked at his door. So, with glaring eyes he followed his wife, keeping carefully out of her sight, until she stopped at the —— bank, ascended the steps, and entered. The moment after she had passed out, two bloodshot eyes glared in upon the paying teller.

"What did that woman want here?" asked a fierce voice.

"Cashed a check for two thousand," replied the gentleman. "Anything wrong?"

"Who was the endorser?" asked the man.

"T. T. Trimmer. Anything wrong?" repeated the teller; but the wrathful face was gone.

Jack Cade had heard enough. He did not follow his wife home. He brooded about the streets until ten o'clock. Then, with all his horrible rage in his heart, and his awful determination arrived at, he went home. The bitterness of jealousy perhaps cannot be understood by those who have never felt it, but we all know its power. It has driven men to commit murder; and men have done to death the women who reposed upon their bosoms, and who never did them wrong, often enough since the world began, no doubt under the influence of this insanity.

Jack felt for the handle of the knife as he crept up stairs, and Phebe would have screamed with terror could she have seen his face; but the light was not lit, and she sat brooding over the grate fire in her little rocking chair.

"Jack," said she, "where have you been? Come here, dear; I've been so anxious."

He came and knelt down beside her, making up his mind that he would tell her why she died at his hands before he stabbed her. That after she was dead, he would kill first Trimmer and then himself. And she put her little hands about his neck, and pressed her lips to his forehead.

"False as a serpent!" he said to himself; "and I've trusted her so!"

"Jack," said she, in a moment, "I've got something to tell you—something good."

"Some lie," he said to himself.

"It's so good, Jack," said Phebe, "I don't know where to begin. You knew grandpa?"

"Yes," said Jack hoarsely, thinking of the day when he took the old man's treasure from his hands.

"Well," said Phebe, "you know he always told me I should have a little legacy when he died. When I came away, he said there would be two thousand dollars each when he died: two for me, and two for Anna, and two for Dick—all his grandchildren."

"She's telling me a lie, to account for the money," said Jack to himself, his blood white hot with rage.

"I didn't tell you so," said Phebe, in a hurry; "but grandpa named the sum, and often when you would talk of the things you needed to start for yourself, I've thought of that; so the other night I made up my mind. I wrote to grandpa, who was so fond of me always, and I said, if he meant to leave me that, please give it to me while he was alive. I'd rather have it now. That it would seem like having some good of his death, if it was left in a will, and I didn't like that, and I hoped he'd live years, and I needed it now. I told him why. So—oh, it's so funny, Jack—grandpa sent me word 'Yes, and very glad to do it.' And then he told me how he'd sold that lot next the church—to who, of all folks? Your boss, Mr. Trimmer. That two thousand was to be paid cash, and he'd manage to save travelling and bother, and have the money paid to me. So I went to see Mr. Trimmer at noon times, when you were away coming home. And oh, I forgot: Mr. Trimmer used to visit grandpa when I was a might of a child, and remembered me very well. He went and kissed me, Jack, when he saw me; said I was ma's image. He wanted ma before she married pa, I've heard, only I never knew it was *your* Mr. Trimmer, Jack. And to-day I got the check, and I drew it, and oh, Jack," cried Phebe, "O, Jack, you'll have them machines yet."

Jack Cade had stopped burning, and was shivering now. He put his head down upon his wife's lap, and said to himself:

"Lord forgive me, a miserable sinner."

There was a longer prayer in that than is written in any prayer-book. It covered a great deal of ground, and it came from his soul.

What a miserable sinner he was, to be sure! and how much forgiveness he needed! Then he bethought him that his first impulse, which was to tell Phebe the truth, was a wrong one. Why make the child unhappy? He kissed her. He took her in his arms. He cried over her; but it was not in joy for the prospect of having that machinery, as Phebe believed. He had more than that to be thankful for. As he crept to bed that night, it struck him that the Lord must be ashamed of him. I do not know whether it was an orthodox thought, but he could not so much think that the powers above were angry; he was too contemptible in his own estimation for that.

Jack Cade is master now, instead of man—capital instead of labor. He is enterprising, and just to his workmen, and makes out very well; and when he does grumble, it is on the other side. But there are moments still when, remembering that sharp knife once hidden in his bosom, and the horrible thoughts that lurked beneath it—remembering how near he came to the shedding of innocent blood—Jack Cade will draw closer to his wife and look at her with a penitent glance that she cannot understand, for she has not the slightest idea that she once came so near to figuring in a direful tragedy, the victim of the foolish jealousy of the man she loved so truly.

A SOLDIER'S BELL.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

O sweet, very sweet, is the sound of all Bells
That are swung in the belfry to call to God's Shrine,
But the music of this one a new triumph swells
Unto households that answer its mission divine.

Let the thought not be called but a mere fond conceit,
From the rapturous brooding of some Fancy born,
As the clear, loud vibrations thus lovingly meet
The glad song of the Breeze on this blest Sabbath morn:

For this Bell that is over the Church calling there,
From a cannon was moulded—a cannon whose throat
Often roared red destruction, while in all the glare
To the terrible peals man his brother man smote.

But the cannon at last, after many a fight,
To an old soldier fell—fitting gift, as they thought;
And he—who will say he was not grandly right?—
Had the grim Iron Wrath to a Peace Angel wrought.

There it pleads, a blest gift from his own heart and hands,
To his own native place. See him at the church door—
What a music of love for him now! Over lands
To a red carnival he will never storm more.

O, thou Bell of God's Sabbath, victorious Bell,
May thy music, prophetic, from Old bring the New,
And all cannon, by nations so changed, sweetly swell
"Christ and Peace," the whole Universe evermore through!

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THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AN UNEXPECTED CALAMITY.

The two ladies quickened their steps, and reached the gate at the moment Gumbo dismounted from his pony. He carried quite a package of papers and magazines which had been ordered from New Orleans, and a single letter for Hester, which bore the Newport postmark.

It was bordered and sealed with black, and for a moment she grew faint with the fear that was to be so speedily realized. If anything had happened to Mrs. Murray, what was she to do with Clarice? The child would certainly be a terrible clog upon her path, perhaps a fatal one, for *she* had never been separated from her sister, and her intelligence might detect the imposition others had failed to suspect.

She hurried on toward the house, saying to her companion:

"I must read this alone. It brings sad news; I can see that, and—and I must get over the shock in the solitude of my own chamber."

"Do not get frightened about Clarice, dear Estelle. She is young and strong, and not likely to have anything fatal happen to her. You are dreadfully agitated, and I really think I ought not to leave you."

Hester turned on her almost fiercely, and peremptorily said:

"But I *will* be left to myself. Why should you insist on being present when I read my letter? I cannot bear to be—"

She paused abruptly, and with a sudden change of voice and manner, said:

"Pardon me, Marion. I did not mean to speak so rudely to you; but I am wild with apprehension, and I cannot bear to be seen by any one when I am deeply moved. My aunt was very dear to me; and if this brings the announcement of her death, I had rather have no one near me when I read it."

"Certainly, if you wish to be alone, I will not intrude on you," replied Marion coldly, for she was quite taken aback by the brusque manner of Hester's first address, and moreover she did not credit the assertion that her new friend was devoted to the relative she had refused to return to, even for a day, before she set out on her southern voyage.

She sat down in the hall, and began to open the papers Gumbo had brought, but her mind took little cognizance of the few articles she skimmed over. In spite of her efforts to conquer the feeling, her first mistrust of Hester returned, and she felt that something was wrong, though what it was she could not clearly see.

In the mean time Hester had gained her own room, bolted the door and torn open the missive, which contained the following lines from an intimate friend of Mrs. Murray's, but one whose name even had been unknown to the reader till that hour.

"NEWPORT, Oct. 3d, 18—.

"MY DEAR ESTELLE: When one has a painful duty to perform, it is best to do it in a simple and direct way. The mourning envelope in which this will be inclosed, will in some measure prepare you for the sad announcement I have to make. Your aunt is dead, and poor Clarice is inconsolable.

"I do not wish to blame you, my dear girl, but I think the affection of the heart, from which Mrs. Murray had so long suffered, was aggravated by the disappointment she felt at not seeing you again. She believed to the last moment that you would run down from Boston, at least to bid her farewell; and when she found that you were actually gone on your voyage, leaving behind you an explanation which she thought insufficient, she had one of her suffocating spells from which she was recovered with great difficulty. From that time she steadily sunk, and three days ago she passed from among us to that higher life for which she was prepared by a long course of noble and unselfish usefulness.

"What she has been to you, my dear Estelle, I need not remind you, for no mother could more faithfully and tenderly have performed her duties toward the children confided to her care. She entreated me to conceal from you the sad truth that your desertion had given her her death blow; but I evaded giving any promise to that effect, for I thought it but right that you should be informed of the cause of her rapid decline, that you may take warning from it, and be more thoughtful for others in the future.

"Young people are apt to be careless and hard-hearted till suffering has taught them some of the lessons life brings to us all; but you, my dear girl, are one of the last persons I should have supposed capable of forgetting what was due to the maternal friend who has for years so tenderly cherished you. I have ever found you gentle, affectionate, and ready to sacrifice yourself to others, and therefore I am anxious to believe that you did what you thought for the best.

"In her last moments, my poor friend was most anxious on account of Clarice, who, I need scarcely say, devoted herself to her aunt, and endeavored in every way to atone for your absence—excusing you, and deprecating any shadow of blame falling on you. She is more fondly attached to you than sisters often are, and knowing this, Mrs. Murray could not bear the thought that you should be separated from each other. Before her death she made every arrangement for restoring Clarice to you, and she is to set out for New Orleans on the steamer that leaves New York on the eighth, accompanied by Miss Anna Lyman, a highly accomplished lady, as you well know, for she was a teacher in the school in which you graduated. She wishes to spend a few years in the South, in the hope that a change of climate will benefit her health; not that she is ill, or unfit for the position she has assumed, but only threatened with incipient lung disease. Your aunt was glad to engage her on liberal terms, and she and her young charge will leave New York at the time I mentioned, under the protection of a merchant of New Orleans, who has promised to see them safely under the care of Herbert Spencer.

"I will not pain you by dwelling on the grief of Clarice; you, who know how deeply attached she was to Mrs. Murray, will understand how much she has suffered, and how necessary a change of scene is to her. I trust that the sea voyage will brighten her up, and her reunion with you will be the best panacea for her wounded heart.

"Mrs. Murray made her will, and bequeathed to yourself and your sister the house in which she lived, and about ten thousand dollars in bank-stock. She expressed the hope that you would spend your summers in Newport, and have the place kept in order for your annual visit. But you will hear of these things from her lawyer, and act according to his advice.

"In conclusion, my dear Estelle, permit me to offer you my profound sympathy for the loss you have sustained. No one can offer it more truly than I do, for I have to mourn the loss of a life-long friend, at an age when I can have no hope of filling the vacancy her death has left.

"Hoping that you may find comfort and consolation in the divine promise of a life beyond the grave, I am, my dear Estelle, your attached friend,

"MARTHA WALTON.

"P.S.—I have inclosed a few lines from Clarice, written after much effort, for the poor child is in such a state that she is incapable of saying much. M. W."

A half sheet of paper had remained unnoticed in the envelope, and with pale lips and frowning brow, Hester drew it forth, and with some difficulty made out the sense of the lines that had evidently been blotted with tears.

"Oh, Estelle, she is gone, and you did not see her—that will be hard on you, sister, for you loved her, if you did go off without coming to her. I won't blame you, dear, for I know you thought you were doing right, but it is the first time you ever did anything hard-hearted, and I can't understand it.

"I am coming to you, sister, for I can't live here now she is gone. Miss Lyman is to be my governess, and you know I am very fond of her. When we get over this, I hope we shall be very happy together. Mrs. Walton says we will, and I try to believe her; but, oh, Estelle, I feel as if I shall never be glad again. Your affectionate sister,

"CLARICE."

To depict the rage, mingled with dread, with which these letters were perused by their recipient, would be simply impossible. Such a contingency as the death of a feeble invalid like Mrs. Murray had occurred to Hester, but she had never dreamed that prompt measures would be taken to transfer Clarice to her protection without even consulting her. She had fully intended to leave the child at a boarding-school if the necessity arose, and never permit her to approach herself for years to come; yet Clarice was even now on her way, accompanied by an utter stranger who was supposed to be well known to her.

Hester felt that she must brave the approaching danger, and act her part as well as was possible under the circumstances. If her courage failed her, all was lost for her, and she tried to calm the paroxysms of ungovernable fury that at moments shook her frame, that she might reflect on the course she must pursue.

She raged through the room like a mad creature, throwing her arms above her head, her eyes blazing, while her face alternately flushed as with fever, or grew white as that of the dead.

"How dared they—how *dared* they do this thing, when I had so cleverly arranged all my plans?" she cried, in a hoarse, choked voice. "I have baffled others, and passed unsuspected. I could have gone on to the culminating point of success but for this. *Could!* Why do I speak thus? for I *can*, and *will* accomplish the end for which I have labored. It is a loathsome task to pet and console that spoiled child, but I will do it so deftly that even *she* shall believe in me. I have only to assume the gentle traits of the sister she has known, and she will accept me as such, for the likeness between my double and myself is so perfect that she can never dream of the exchange which has been made. She may miss something in the sister she so blindly loves, but she is too young to analyze character, and understand the difference between the nature she has known and the one she has now to deal with. I can win *her* over, but what am I to do with the woman who is coming with her? But for her, I think I could see my way clearly enough. She has been *my teacher!* ha! ha! and I must, of course, be most kind and respectful to her. I would give a great deal to know what style of woman she is, but I have no clue. Stay—is there not something about Miss Anna Lyman in one of Annette's letters to Estelle Landry? I have a vague memory of some such thing. Let me see—Fortune, after befriending me so long, will not surely desert me now."

In a few moments the letters of Miss De Lorme were in her hand, and she was eagerly skimming over their contents. Her face darkened, as one after another was laid aside, but an exclamation of triumph burst from her lips as she flashed her lightning glance over the last one in the package.

"Ah! I thought so! Here it is;" and she slowly read the paragraph, as if weighing every word:

"Remember me affectionately to Miss Anna Lyman, and tell her I have begun the course of reading she recommended to me when I was in Newport. I can never hope to be such a student as she is, or so great a lover of books, but I hope in time to become intelligent enough to be a companion for cultivated people."

"So, so—this Miss Lyman is what the negroes call a *booktionary* woman. I dare say I shall get on with her well enough, if I pass scatheless through the first ordeal. I shall be very effusive in my welcome, and then give her the library to range in, and she will very likely be oblivious of what is going on around her. I can only hope so, at any rate. Since she must come, I must make the best of it."

A light tap came to her door, and Hester went to unbolt it, expecting to find Mrs. Oliver there. But she had only sent Zelma to ask if Miss Landry would have her tea sent into her own room.

The girl carried a lamp in her hand, and she looked with startled eyes at the dishevelled figure the light fell on. The combs had fallen from Hester's hair, and it streamed down over her black dress in long waving curls; her collar had slipped to one side, and her pale face and glittering eyes almost frightened the silly little maid. Catching her breath with a gulp, Zelma said:

"Lors, Miss Estelle, you looks like a ghostess—dat's what you does, an' I's almost feard to come nigh you."

"I thought that ghosts always appear in white, Zelma, and you see nothing white about me, except my face. I feel that I am pale, and with good cause, for I have had a great shock. Tell Mrs. Oliver that I will have a cup of tea sent in here to me, and an hour hence I hope she will come in to me herself. By that time I shall be calm enough to talk with her. Help me to take off my dress, for I wish to lie down."

Zelma hastened to obey the last command, and Hester put on her dressing-gown, and threw herself upon the wide sofa which stood between the windows.

"Now shade the light, and bring in my tea. I can take nothing else to-night."

The tea was brought, and eagerly drank, in the hope that it would steady her nerves and enable her to think more clearly. She had no appetite, and the thought of food was repulsive to her: for the first time for many weeks she began to dread what the future might bring to her. Of late, she had thought only of Raymond and his coming back to claim her as his wife; but now she shuddered, as she saw that a gulf might open between them which all her craft could not bridge.

She lay there in the semi-darkness, thinking, planning, but never for one moment repenting of what she had done. The little good that was in her was slowly dying a violent death, and she was preparing herself for the use of *any* means to enable her to maintain the evil eminence to which she had attained.

Mrs. Oliver took her supper alone, and then wrapping a shawl around her, paced the gallery in deep and rather bewildering thought, till the time came for her to go to Hester. She could not reconcile the contradictions in the character of her new friend, and she hated herself for feeling unkindly toward her on account of a few words spoken in a moment of excited feeling. Yet she could not resist the conviction that those hasty words were a better key to Hester's true nature, than all the gentle softness which had been assumed to win her over.

When she at length went in, she found Hester lying in the dim room, with a crimson shawl thrown over her, which rendered her pallor more striking, even by the faint light shed by the shaded lamp.

At first Marion thought she had fallen asleep, but when she hesitated in her approach, a faint, well modulated voice said:

"Come and sit by me, Marion, and try to speak comfort to me, for I have heard very afflicting news. I sent you Mrs. Walton's letter to read, and you know what has happened. Perhaps you think, because I did not go to my aunt as she wished, before I left Boston, that I did not love her; but you are mistaken. I feared that the agitation of a meeting, under such painful circumstances, would be too much for her, and I acted more for her benefit, than from any wish on my part to avoid a parting scene with one who has stood in the place of a mother to me. I cannot tell you what a blow her death has been to me."

"My dear Estelle, you have my heartfelt sympathy for this irreparable loss. I beg that you will not imagine that I am sitting up in judgment upon you, for I try to remember the Scripture injunction which forbids us to do so, and as far as possible to act upon it. Your motive for not going to Newport was a kind and self-denying one, as I now understand it, and you must have been tenderly attached to Mrs. Murray to grieve over her thus. You are paler than I ever have seen you, and your voice has tears in it."

"But none have come to my eyes yet. I think if I could weep I should feel better, but I cannot. When my poor little Clarice comes, perhaps the fountain will then be unsealed, but that will be many days hence. In the mean time I must bear up as well as I can. It was a kind thought in my dear aunt to provide for sending my sister to me without delay, after her own death. It was the most natural and fitting thing to do. The poor child would not be contented away from me, now that her second mother has gone to 'the land of the leal.'"

"People who are deeply afflicted never make quotations, however apt they may be," thought Mrs. Oliver, and then she mentally accused herself of being a wretch to make such a criticism at such a moment. By way of atonement, she took the hand of Hester in her own, and gently said:

"It was a kind thought, and the presence of Clarice will be a source of great comfort to you. The lady who is coming with her can take my place when I go away, and thus you are saved from the infliction of a companion chosen for you by Mrs. De Lorme."

With sudden animation, Hester said:

"I should not have accepted any person recommended by *her*. Some old, fussy horror would be set over me as a duenna, if I were simple enough to allow my dear mamma to interfere in my affairs. Mothers always hate their son's wives, and I suppose Mrs. De Lorme will be no exception to the rule. I intend to hold my own against her, and I shall have Raymond on my side. The dear boy loves me so well, that when I think of him I am almost consoled for the calamities that have lately fallen on me."

"Yes—you have had much to bear," replied Mrs. Oliver, in some surprise at the sudden change of manner, and the lively tones in which Hester spoke. The latter remembered the *rôle* she had to play, and sinking back, languidly said:

"I am so impulsive, and so sensitive on the point you referred to just now, that I forgot myself strangely. Mrs. De Lorme's conduct to-day was not pleasing to me; but I must remember that she is the mother of my darling Ray, and is therefore entitled to respectful mention from me. I am glad that Miss Lyman is coming, as her presence here will be sufficient to protect me from any other invasion. I used to like her very well when I was under her tutelage, and she will do her duty by Clarice."

A silence that lasted some time fell between them, and then Hester wearily said:

"I am exhausted with all I have gone through this evening, and if you will send Zelma in to me, I think I will go to bed. I do not hope to sleep much, but I shall have time to think over the past, and make up my mind to the inevitable."

"Shall I mix a sedative for you?" asked Mrs. Oliver, as she arose. "You brought with you a medicine chest, I believe."

"Yes—but there is nothing of that kind to be found in it. I never take anything that can confuse my brain, for I always like it to be clear and in good working order. Good-night, Marion. I need only quiet, and when I am tired with thinking, I suppose sleep will come to me, as it does to other afflicted ones."

She half raised her recumbent form and held up her lips to be kissed, and Marion lightly bestowed the expected caress and left the room.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

HESTER PLAYING A DESPERATE GAME.

Zelma soon afterward came in, and quietly performed her duties for the night, for she had been told of Mrs. Murray's death, and was awed out of attempting to entertain her mistress with her usual chatter. When she was dismissed, Hester arose, fastened her door, and took out the medicine case she had refused to allow Mrs. Oliver to open. She took from it a preparation of morphine which she habitually used in seasons of great excitement. The need of it had not yet fastened upon her, but she was in a fair way to become a devotee to opium in some form, for the delicious intoxication it at first produces was peculiarly soothing to her temperament.

For the present it lulled the nerves to passiveness, while the brain acted with double power under its influence. When that phase passed away, the dreamy one set in: she floated among the stars, sustained on a nebulous cloud glittering with all the hues of the iris, and imagination seemed to grasp the universe. Memory was evoked, and she repeated portions of the Lotus Eaters, and then fell into a tranquil slumber which lasted till a late hour on the following morning. Her mind was clear, and all her senses brightened to almost preternatural power, and she laughed aloud as she thought:

"De Quincy was right about the effects of opium, though of course he, who had gone through all the phases of enjoyment or suffering it can produce, was better fitted to describe them than a mere medical man. The drug does not stupefy me any more than it did him, and this morning I realize the heavenly tranquillity he so graphically depicts. What a pity it is that we dare not use this divine agent every day! If we could, we might almost claim kindred with the gods, and walk the earth defying fate so long as this elixir of happiness remained to us."

She lay quiescent a long time, reflecting on the danger that was approaching, and deciding on the best means of evading it.

"I can baffle them all," she at length muttered. "But if it were not for Ray, I would give the whole thing up, and go on the stage. I believe I could win brilliant success as an actress, and make a fortune equal to that I have usurped. The life would suit me too, far better than the humdrum proprieties to which I must conform in my present position. But then I may overestimate my powers. I might fail, and all would be over with me. Moreover, I love Ray; I have always loved him since we played together in childhood: even if I did not, I would not consent to forego my triumph over his haughty mother. Ha, ha! to think that the daughter of *that woman*, as she contemptuously calls *my* mother, should become her son's wife! I think when she is dying, if I have the opportunity, I will whisper the degrading secret in her ear, and let her take it with her to Hades, to be mourned over even there as an irreparable disgrace.

"I hate Mrs. De Lorme. I should like to strike a deadly blow at her, but I dare not. I have already been imprudent in my conduct toward her. I fully meant to conciliate her, but the antagonism I feel when she approaches me has proved too strong for me. I must change my tactics. I cannot afford to be worsted by her in the game I am playing.

"Heigh-ho! I could lie here and dream the greater part of the day, but I must be up and doing. I offended Marion last night, and set her to thinking strangely of me. I could see that she was putting constraint on herself when she came in to see me, though she tried to be kind and sympathetic. She has a sort of clairvoyance which is very dangerous to me, and I wish that Herbert was to take her away at once. When he hears of the expected advent of Miss Lyman, he may hasten his marriage, and that would suit me exactly."

She heard the handle of her door turned softly, and remembering that she had locked it on the previous night, Hester sprang up, and hastened to unfasten it. Zelma came in, bringing in an armful of wood, for even in that genial climate the mornings were cool enough to render a fire agreeable. With her usual pertness, the girl asked:

"Is you feard on us darkies, Miss Estelle, dat you locks yer do's? I's bin at it three times dis mornin', an' couldn't git in to make yer fire. Miss Oliver tole me not to make a noise to 'sturb you, an' I were mighty keerful. I hopes I didn't wake you, nor nothin'."

"No, you neither disturbed me nor anything else," replied Hester, smiling faintly at the form of speech so common among negroes, and so incomprehensible to those who are unaccustomed to them. "I am not afraid of anything, Zelma, as you will find out when you've known me longer. I fastened the door last night because I wished for no interruption, and forgot to unlock it. Make the fire, and help me to dress. I am going out to breakfast."

"Lor, Miss Estelle, Miss Oliver done tuk her brekfis two hours ago. You dunno how late it is. She ordered yourn to be kep' hot fur you, an' Aunt Z'lieme said as how she'd bring it in to you when you was ready for it."

"What time is it, and where is Mrs. Oliver now?"

"It's ten o'clock, an' she's gone to walk on the levee."

"I had no idea it was so late, but I did not sleep till after midnight. As I must breakfast alone, Zulieme may as well bring it in here."

The little maid would have gossipped as usual, while combing and arranging the hair of her mistress, but Hester curtly said:

"I am not in the humor to listen to your idle talk, Zelma. Make haste and finish my hair. I have something to think of that is more important than plantation gossip."

"I were only a goin' to tell you 'bout de fuss Gaby made over buryin' dat parrot," said the girl, in an injured tone. "He cried ober it as if it was a human, an' said it were a shame dat de poor creeter were put out'n de worl' afore his time, an' it would come home to de one as did it yet."

"He said *that*, did he?" and a flash of flame leaped from the eyes of the speaker, and she threw her arm up suddenly, as if tempted to strike something. The loose sleeve of her dressing-gown fell back, baring her rounded arm quite to the shoulder, and a deep scar on the upper portion of the forearm was displayed plainly to the eyes of the maid. She was frightened by the movement, and deprecatingly said:

"Gaby didn't mean no harm to Miss Lena, fur he thinks a heap o' her. He were jest so 'stressed he didn't know what he was a talkin' 'bout, an' *she* gin him the sweet stuff what killed him, you know. Lors, Miss Estelle, what ever made sich a scar on yer arm?"

Hester hastily drew down the sleeve, and said, with sudden calmness:

"My arm was hurt in that railroad accident, but of that I cannot bear to speak, and you are to say nothing of this disfigurement. Go to your aunt, and tell her to bring me my breakfast."

Zelma left the room, and Hester drew back the sleeve again in much perturbation. She thought:

"How could I be so imprudent as to display this tell-tale scar upon my arm? If that tattling little wretch tells Zulieme of it, she may remember that Hester Blake was bitten on that spot by a dog that was supposed to be going mad, and the place was cauterized to prevent the poison from destroying me. I must get rid of her and her son, and I will ask Herbert to take them as house servants when he gets married. That will be better than risking their presence near me. I cannot treat them as they evidently expect to be treated, and it will be better, for many reasons, to let them go."

Zulieme came in with the tray, and arranged a table, which she placed in front of her mistress, and then stood on one side of the fireplace stealthily observing her, as Hester daintily partook of the good things she had carefully prepared for her herself.

She hoped that Hester would speak kindly to her, and tell her of the expected arrival of her sister. She had heard of it from Mrs. Oliver, but she thought her nurseling should also inform her of an event which so nearly concerned herself. Finding that she did not refer to it, or notice her presence in any way, the woman abruptly said:

"I was very glad to hear from Mrs. Oliver that Miss Clarice is coming home. I did not nurse *her*, and I have not seen her since she was a little child, but I was very fond of her, and it will seem like old times to have you both back again."

"Yes, my sister is coming to Le Bocage. Of course I shall be glad to have her with me, but it would have been better for her, perhaps, if she had remained at the North till her education was completed. My dear aunt thought only of the child's wishes, and sacrificed her improvement to them. I shall be the gainer, but I would have given up my desire to have her with me if I had considered it to her advantage to do so. It has been settled that she is to come without consulting me, and all we now have to do is to prepare for her reception. The room opening from the library I shall give up to Miss Lyman, and the smaller one adjoining it can be arranged for Clarice. You will see that everything is prepared for them by the time they arrive."

"Certainly, Miss Estelle; but I thought you'd be so glad to have Miss Clarice with you ag'in, that you'd think your aunt had done the best thing that could have been thought of, in ordering that she should be sent here at once."

"If I could feel glad about anything just now, I should rejoice in the prospect of welcoming my pretty darling to her father's home. But my heart is very sad, Zulieme. My father's death was a severe affliction, and affliction following so soon after it is a great blow to me;" and she raised her handkerchief to the eyes in which no tears were found.

The woman believed her emotion to be genuine, and she drew near Hester and laid her hand lightly on her shoulder. It was the one on which was the scar, and in spite of herself she shrank away from Zulieme, though she was fully aware that its presence could not be detected by a touch.

The words of tender sympathy froze on the lips that had unclosed to utter them, and Zulieme said almost roughly:

"It's too late to cry when things is done and over. *I* could cry my heart out if I'd let myself do it, over the change that's come 'pon you since you went away from here. You don't seem to vally them as cared most for you, an' I sometimes think the fairy tales you used to read me when you was a chile has come true 'bout yourself; only the little godmother has took away your heart of flesh and feelin', and put in your buzzum one as don't beat for them as loves you, an' would do anything to serve you, if you'd only show a little feelin' for 'em."

The words of the woman might, perhaps, have touched some responsive chord in Hester's bosom, but for the tone in which they were uttered. She had expected sympathy for her own supposed affliction, and here was Zulieme so full of *her* wrongs that she had ventured to refer to them brusquely, even at such a time as that. She grew pale with anger, and fixing her glittering eyes on those that were yearningly regarding her, said:

"I cannot see what you have to complain of. I treat you with every degree of consideration to which you are entitled, yet you dare to speak as you did just now. You have worn a discontented face ever since that first night when I made you understand that I am no longer your nurseling, but your mistress. In my turn I complain of that, for I do not like to see dreary looking people around me. I think it will be best for us to part, Zulieme, and if you choose to go away with Mrs. Oliver when she is married, I will permit you to do so."

"Go 'way! Leave Gabriel behind me! Go from the place I was born on! Oh, Miss Estelle, you *can't* be in earnest. Sure I an't heard you right."

"You have perfectly understood my meaning; but I have no wish to separate you from your son. As he is your only child, I will permit him to accompany you to New Orleans. I have no intention to sell you, as you are family servants, but I will hire you both to Herbert Spencer, and you will not find him a hard master. Marion will need capable and well-trained domestics, and such can be hired with difficulty in this country. I think it will be best for you to go, Zulieme, for I fear that you and I will not get on well together if you remain here. You have wielded too much authority in this house to keep in your proper place, and I will not tolerate such familiarity as you have twice been guilty of since I came hither. If you *were* my nurse, that does not give you the right to complain of me as you have taken the liberty of doing."

The woman listened to her with clasped hands and staring eyes, and when she had finished this long speech, she brokenly replied:

"I'm your slave, Miss Estelle, an' if you chooses to forgit all that I has done for you, an' send me off to live wi' strange people, I can't help myself. Mebbe it'll be better to go with Mr. Spencer than to stay here to have my heart broke. I'm thankful that you'll let my boy go with me, for *now* he's all the child I can lay claim to."

"Very well—it is settled then; so you and Gabriel can make your preparations to leave with Mrs. Oliver when she is married. She is a just and kind-hearted person, and you will have no cause to regret the change you are about to make. Give me a shawl; I think I will walk on the gallery till Marion comes back, and I can tell her how thoughtful I have been for her comfort. You need not look so doleful, for you will often see me in her house; indeed I think of spending this winter there."

"An' who's to take charge o' things here?" asked Zulieme. "The overseer looks arter the plantation, but some 'sponsible person is allers left 'bout the house to see that the work is properly done. Your pa put me in the place, and if he was livin', he'd be the last one to think of sich a change as this."

"I will not have you speak to me in such a tone as that, Zulieme. *I* am mistress here now, and I wish you to understand that my will shall be law on the place. I can easily find a substitute for yourself among the women about me, and you ought really to be grateful to me for giving you an opportunity to see something of life in a great city like New Orleans."

"I has bin there, an' I seen nothin' but bricks an' mortar piled up in rows, keepin' out the free air, an' stiflin' people as wa'n't used to 'em. But I likes Mrs. Oliver, an' if I *must* go, I'd rather be with her than with anybody else. I'm obleeged to you for that much, Miss Estelle, but it hurts my heart to find that you're so anxious to send me away from yourself."

"I am sorry that your heart is so sensitive," said Hester coldly. "It is for your own good that I allow you to leave me. I shall, doubtless, be put to some inconvenience, but I prefer that to having near me a servant whose exaggerated ideas of her own importance prevents her from understanding her position and—mine."

"I'm sorry you think that, Miss Estelle," said Zulieme almost humbly. "I was never 'cused of want of respect afore, an' I'm sure I wouldn't have failed in it to you, if I'd knowed you'd be 'fended bekase I wanted you to show me that you cared for me the least bit in the world. I know now that you don't, an' I'm willin' to go anywheres. It don't much matter to me now what happens."

"Don't be a goose, Zulieme. You will have your own child with you, and that will console you for any fancied indifference on my part. Take the breakfast things away, and send Zelma to attend to the room. I shall return to it to write letters when it is in order."

She folded her shawl around her and left the apartment, and Zulieme stood looking after her in a bewildered manner.

"Oh, Lor', to think that the chile that used to be so tender-hearted *could* do sich a thing as this," she finally muttered. "I'm almost tempted to b'lieve that when the master took 'em north, he give the true one to Hagar Blake, an' took her chile in de place o' my darlin'. But no; he'd never have done *that*, for the woman had made him suffer too much to be forgiven."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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THE PETTIFOGGER'S APPEAL.

Judge Chase—not Salmon P., but another,—Jothan T., of New Hampshire—tells a good story of his experience in the Western wilds. It was years ago, and the Judge was at the time a member of Congress, and during a vacation he went West to visit friends and relatives who had removed thither. Upon his arrival he found an old-time acquaintance engaged as plaintiff in an important lawsuit, and seeing the justice of his friend's case, he volunteered to take his part in court. It was in a frontier town, and the surroundings were primitive in the extreme. To an intelligent jury the case could really have had but one side. The defendant was a bush-whacking Hoosier, and he had not only violated a solemn and legal contract to the great injury of the plaintiff, but he had embezzled funds which had been intrusted to his care, and he had also disposed of property not his own, and appropriated the proceeds.

Judge Chase entered upon the case with assurance. The jury were rough-bred Hoosiers, but they looked like honest men, and he would enlighten them. He explained to them how plain and just was the claim of his client, and in the course of his remarks he referred several times to the Common Law of England. He fancied that the untutored men were interested in thus learning about the old laws of the mother country, and he explained to them how much of our present code was derived from the English Common Law. When he had concluded he felt that his client was safe and sure. How could it be otherwise?

He did not know the temper of the Hoosier jury; but the pettifogger did; and the judge's strong fabric of legal lore and common-sense was to be demolished off-hand. The frontier lawyer, uncombed and unkempt, arose with a flourish and a whoop.

"Gentle*men* of the Jury," he cried, sweeping his long, bony arm toward the sprucely dressed Congressional dignitary, "who is this man that comes here to cram the Common Law of England down our throats. What do we want of English law, any way,—and if we *do* have it, why does he give us the common kind. The *Common* Law of England! Why don't he give us the *best?* But we don't want English law at all—not a bit of it. An't we got law enough of our own here in Injeany?—Why didn't the gentleman give us a touch o' that? I'll tell ye why he didn't do it. He know'd very well that our Injeany law would be death to his case. And so he thinks to fool you with English law. Good Heavens! what did our forefathers of the Revolution fight for? Didn't they fight—didn't they spend their last dollar, and spill almost their last drop of blood—just to cut clear of the mean, contemptible, aristocratic law of old John Bull?—and now the gentleman thinks he can shove the rotten old stuff down our throats whether we will or no. Gentlemen of the jury, be it yours to show him how far he can play his soft sawder and nonsense on the intelligent and patriotic twelve loyal Injeany citizens what have the interests of my client at stake! *English Law!* BAH! *We don't see it!*"

The jury remembered the story of the fathers of the Revolution, and they gave the defendant his case with unhesitating unanimity. C.

THE CHRYSALIS AND BUTTERFLY.

BY LOUISE S. UPHAM.

With happy smiles upon a face
Whose dimples banished shadows,
A sweet girl sought us, laden with
The fragrance of the meadows.

She brought a shining chrysalis;
We told its wondrous story,
And placed it on a rose-tree near,
To show its dawning glory.

With eager haste she came, next morn,
To watch her tiny treasure,
Lest daring, wanton hands, perchance,
Should rob her of her pleasure.

And lo! upon the window ledge,
There lay her shattered idol!
While, toying with the blushing rose,
Arrayed as for a bridal,

There shone a brilliant butterfly,
Resplendent in its beauty,
Sipping the rose, as coining sweets
Was all its earthly duty.

Where now the glory of the prize
But yester fondly cherished?
Ah! robbed of all that gave it light,
In one brief night it perished!

The dead husk place away from sight;
Hide it beneath green mosses;
Admire its angel and rejoice:
Our crowns are made from crosses.

MARGARET'S CHOICE.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

The house of John Dempster, house carpenter and builder, was very quiet one afternoon in November, a dreary, cold afternoon, when a drizzling rain seemed sympathizing with the tears a mother shed, as she sat in her desolation, weeping. Only a few short hours had passed since a little coffin had been carried across the humble threshold, and a sunny-haired, blue-eyed child, John Dempster's only daughter, had been put to rest in a narrow grave.

Mary Dempster grieved as only a loving mother can grieve, when the child she has fondled and nursed for three long years is carried away where she can see its bright face no more. While she wept, John was on his way home from his shop, where he had some unfinished work that was pressing sorely upon his hands, but yet the mother was not entirely alone. When she became John Dempster's wife, she knew that she had had a dearly beloved predecessor, who had left a boy, six years old at the time of his father's second marriage. A gentle and loving step-mother Mary Dempster had been to the lad; and now, as she sat mourning, he crept softly to her side.

Two arms clasped her round the neck, two quivering lips were pressed upon her face, and a broken voice sobbed:

"Oh, mamma, I wish God had taken me to Heaven, and left you your own little Maggie!"

The woman's heart rose in bitter self-reproach. In her watchful care over her sick child, in her selfish sorrow over her bereavement, she knew that she had neglected her step-son, and now he was telling her he would have given his own young life for her darling's.

She was an impulsive, warm-hearted woman, and she opened her arms to the sobbing, trembling child at once.

"God knew best, Harry," she said. "I am very glad I have a dear little son to comfort me."

"*Are* you glad?" he asked, very earnestly. "Mrs. Wills said in the parlor that you would not 'go on' so if it had been me."

"Mrs. Wills does not know how much you and I love each other, does she, Harry?"

The boy nestled down in the loving embrace, all his doubts over, all his lonely misery comforted; and so it happened, that when John Dempster opened the door he found his wife and boy consoling each other. But the man held in his own arms a burden that caused the mother's heart to thrill with sudden pain.

"Mary," he said, speaking in the slow, deliberate voice peculiar to him, "I found this child asleep, alone, in the shavings of the shed. She seems hungry, cold, and almost worn out with poverty. Shall I take her to the alms-house?"

Harry had drawn very near his father as he was speaking.

"Oh, mamma!" he cried, as the child's face was shown, "it is Maggie come back!"

Mary Dempster was not the woman to thrust away the little one, pale, famished, and just the age of the baby she had lost, and a few hours of motherly care made the child dear to her.

They called her Maggie, the pale, dark-eyed child, so unlike their own blue-eyed blossom; they clothed her in the dainty garments fashioned for their own Maggie; and as the years rolled away, and no other child was sent to gladden their home, they forgot that this was not indeed their own.

Yet, though they never spoke of it, the father and mother realized that there was some undefined difference between this child and the rosy, rollicking children by whom she was surrounded. An atmosphere of sensitive refinement seemed to shut her out from their rough childish sports, and as she grew older the woman soul looked from her great dark eyes while yet her years were those of a child.

Unconsciously she led them all, the slow-speaking father, the warm-hearted mother, and the merry, loving brother. John Dempster had sent his own son to public school, and Maggie too conquered the mysteries of learning in the girls' department of the same building; but after she had graduated from the grammar-school, there was no talk of binding her to a trade, as there probably would have been with their own Maggie, for John, though he had kept his family in comfort, had saved no penny for a rainy day, and his own son knew his own right hand must carve his way to fortune.

Literally *carve* his way, for Harry had learned his father's trade, and then served an apprenticeship to a wood carver. It might have been this work of Harry's that first awoke the artist soul in Maggie; it might have been the sight of the rude pictures from which he selected his patterns that first guided her fingers in their beautiful work, or the spirit might have been roused without any outside suggestion.

But it was there. It was mirrored in the great dark eyes that looked with wistful seeking upon all nature; it lay hidden in the nervous little hands that were so helpful in the household. It was latent in the shrinking from rude contrasts of color, from all that was repulsive or hideous, from jarring sounds and discordant scenes.

She was fifteen years old when Harry, who was determined to excel in his business, brought from the library a volume upon the rudiments of sculpture and painting. It lay upon the little table in the sitting-room when Maggie dusted in the morning, and she opened it eagerly. Before she read the last page, she knew the meaning of the restless longing she had felt all her life, the reaching of her soul for something above, beyond her homely, happy life.

John Dempster humored her wish to take lessons in drawing and painting, and her teacher found he had to guide the taste and fingers of genius. She worked early and late; she knew no rest in striving for the power to translate by her fingers the language of her soul. It was the happiness, the wretchedness of possessing the artist spirit, without the artist power.

The family knew that the girl was reaching to heights they neither understood nor cared for; but they made her home happy in their love and tenderness, and hoped she would still be their daughter, even if she became an artist, and the world sought her for her art.

And the boy, who had given her a brother's devotion from the day she had been brought, a homeless waif, to fill the place of the dead sister, as he reached manhood, knew that no brother's love could content him—that the dark-eyed, quiet girl had taken captive his entire heart, and that in the years to come she must answer his love, or he must flee from her face and influence forever.

He was a large, powerfully built man of twenty-eight, and she a slender girl of seventeen, when he told her his love, and asked her if she could be his wife.

The great brown eyes looked dreamily into the eager blue ones, as she answered him:

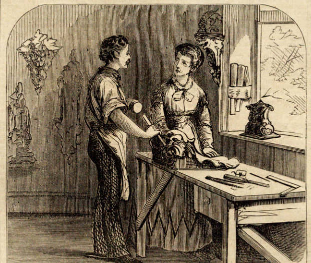
"Let me study a few years, Harry; let me win my place as an artist before I think of a wife's cares and joys."

"But you love me?"

"I love you," she said softly, and then shrank a little as he poured out the fullness of his heart in rapturous gratitude.

The father and mother rejoiced in the betrothal that was to bind them all more firmly together, though there was no talk of marriage. Harry was prospering, but had no great wealth to offer his bride, and the quiet, uneventful life went on, Margaret studying closely, dreaming her maiden dreams, not of lovers, of riches, or gayety, but of artist renown, of the Italian skies and art treasures of which she had heard and read, but which seemed so far away and unattainable in her humble life.

She was eighteen when, one day, there came to her a letter. In all her life before the girl had never seen her name written upon an envelope, and here was one bearing foreign postmarks, and sent to her from the far off Italy of which she had dreamed.



Wondering, she opened it to read the mystery of her life in plain words.

The letter was from her mother, and she was told of the artist father who had died when she was a wee babe, leaving her mother to struggle with the world. She had found the child an incumbrance, and had purposely left it in John Dempster's path, hoping he would give it his dead girl's place in his home. Free once more, the widow had married a man of large wealth, who proved a very tyrant. Hiding the secret of the child from him at first, the mother, as years passed away, dared not reveal it, and accompanied her husband abroad, never telling him of the child she had secretly watched for long years.

"But now," she wrote, "he is dead. I am free, wealthy, and my own mistress. Come to me, my child—come to the land where your inheritance from your father, your artist soul, can expand and be cultivated!"

There were promises of love, of wealth, of all facility for the cultivation of her talent. The mother poured out in that letter the love hidden and cramped for years, and painted glowing pictures of happiness to come. A check was inclosed for a wardrobe suited to her new position, and travelling expenses to Italy.

To Italy! Margaret felt as if she was in a wild, strange dream, so unreal, so wildly improbable, that it was hard to look it steadily in the face and know that it was true. To go to Italy, to study and become an artist in that fairy land of art!

In imagination she flew over the seas, and tried to picture this unknown mother who was opening the gates of Paradise for her: wealth, position, a true mother, and Italy.

Suddenly upon her dream broke a reality. Only a voice, asking:

"Where is Margaret?"

Down from its airy flight came the girl's heart, and another picture rose in her mind—a picture of a home made desolate by her desertion of a loving heart, broken by her false faith. Life without Harry! An hour ago it would have seemed as impossible to live without breath, as to live without her joyous, loving betrothed. Now, in the face of a possible separation, the girl began to realize what Harry had been to her in her whole life: the unselfish love, the devotion that would have taken her, a penniless, nameless orphan, to his home and heart. And quickened by the reading of her mother's letter, the judgment of the young artist asserted itself, and she knew that the time had come for a decision in her life—a decision that must govern her whole future. She knew that the selfish, worldly nature that could desert a little child, would never give up the daughter who might be a pride to her, to a poor wood carver, who had but the education of the common schools, and no fortune.

Yet, to give up Harry—Harry with whom she had promised to pass her life, who loved her, and who, she knew now, had won her whole true heart for his own.

Margaret was very pale as she came into the family sitting-room, but there was a lustre in her large eyes, and a happy smile upon her lips, as she went to Harry.

"Will you marry me now, Harry?" she asked. "I will tell you the reason when we come home from church."

Rather bewildered, Harry said:

"I have wanted to marry you ever since I can remember, Margaret."

"Come now," she said. "Father and mother will come too, and we will go to the minister."

"But, Maggie," her mother cried, "no wedding, no—"

"Let the lass alone, Mary," said John Dempster. "She will do what is right."

The minister asked no questions, seeing the old people with the young couple, and Maggie sealed her choice before she laid the foreign letter before her husband and those who had been her true parents.

The steamer carrying her answer to her mother, crossed the one carrying the tidings of that mother's death, and her own inheritance of large wealth.

This was long years ago. Harry and his wife climbed together the ladder of education, travelled together, worked together, the one learning the sculptor's art, the other painting till she reached the summit of her ambition, and was acknowledged an artist. With wealth, a happy home, honor and love surrounding her, Margaret has never regretted her choice.

* * *

—To make punishments efficacious, two things are necessary. They must never be disproportioned to the offence, and they must be certain.

PRETTY GOOD.

Charley F. is our baker. Albeit he has suffered misfortunes enough during the past year to drive a nervous man distracted, he still maintains his equanimity and exceeding good-nature. Grubson is comparatively a new-comer into town, but he has been with us long enough to exhibit a narrow, grasping disposition, and a spirit of badgering not at all pleasant to those who chance to have business with him.

A few days since Grubson came into the store-room of the bakery while a number of people were waiting for their tea-rolls, and picking up an ordinary family loaf he demanded to know its price.

"Ten cents," replied the baker, who happened to be at the time behind the counter.

"Ten cents!" repeated Grubson, with a disapproving growl. "'Pears to me your bread has riz."

"Yes," quietly responded Charley. "Our loaf bread is all riz,—we make that kind."

"But," persisted the growler, nipping a big piece out with his thumb and finger, and affecting to taste it, "seems to me this ere bread is light."

"Certainly," nodded Charles, with a smile. "Our customers like it made so."

"But," snapped out Grubson, with another poke through the brown crust, "I mean 'at this loaf don't weigh so much as it ought to."

"It will weigh less still if you gobble any more at it before you buy it," replied the baker, with a smile in which half a score of his customers heartily joined.

Grubson had found more than his match at badgering, and with a very red face and a downcast eye he paid for the loaf and departed.

C.

SCIENCE.

Eight expeditions from various countries are now engaged in exploring the regions about the North Pole. These are enumerated by the distinguished German geographer, Dr. Petermann, as follows: 1. Captain Hall's American expedition, which is now supposed to be somewhere north of Baffin's Bay; 2. a Norwegian expedition, under Captain Tobiesen, to circumnavigate the island of Spitzbergen; 3. Mr. Edward Whymper's canoe expedition to the interior of Greenland; 4. Count Wilczek's Austrian expedition, to establish coal depots for a larger expedition which will follow it, and also to make an ascent of the highest mountain in Spitzbergen; 5. a Norwegian expedition, under Svend Foyn, to the Siberian Sea; 6. the Swedish expedition under Prof. Nordenskiold, to whom the Government has granted fifteen thousand rix dollars and two ships of war; 7. a French expedition to the Pole, by way of the Sea of Kara; 8. a Russian expedition which intends to winter in Nova Zembla.

English scientific men are continually finding fault with their Government for its neglect of science; and they have exceptionally good cause of complaint at this time in the ill-treatment of Dr. Joseph D. Hooker, director of the celebrated Botanic Gardens at Kew, by Mr. Ayrton, the first Commissioner of Works, who is his superior officer. This has called forth a written remonstrance, signed by Sir Charles Lyell, Mr. Darwin, Professor Tyndall, Professor Huxley, and others of like distinction, and addressed to Mr. Gladstone, calling attention to Dr. Hooker's eminent services to botanical science, and to the front rank occupied by the Kew Gardens since they came under his superintendence. The uncalled for interference of Mr. Ayrton is properly denounced by the press.

Professor James A. Dana, in the last number of *Silliman's Journal*, explains his theory that coral islands do not indicate the burial of continents beneath the ocean, but rather the gradual subsidence of volcanic isles. "Recent dredgings and soundings," he says, "have proved that the bottom of the oceanic basin has little of the diversity of mountain chains and valleys that prevail over the continents; and through this observation they have afforded new demonstration of the proposition that the oceans have always been oceans."

We are glad to learn that Dr. C. F. Chandler of Columbia College has been chosen adjunct professor of chemistry in the College of Physicians and Surgeons; and this reminds us to suggest that in his capacity of chemist to the New York Board of Health, he might confer an important benefit upon the public by an analysis of different sorts of wall paper, for the purpose of ascertaining the relative quantities of poison which they contain. It cannot be doubted that some of the papers now commonly used are exceedingly injurious to health.

The perfection to which submarine torpedoes have been brought within the past few years is a subject of great interest to iron ship-builders, many of whom now express the opinion that as the explosive power of the torpedo may be increased without limit, and as the shock from even a moderate charge is so very destructive, any attempt to construct an absolutely torpedo-proof ship must prove a failure. They advocate the employment of contrivances, either attached to the vessel or propelled in some other manner, by which the torpedo may be pushed aside or away from the hull before it is encountered by it.

A fine specimen of the horned frog has just been procured from California by the Zoological Society of London. It was sent all the way from San Diego by book post, in a thin paper box, and arrived at its destination in England just four weeks after it was mailed, in good condition, notwithstanding its lack of food during the entire journey. None of these creatures have hitherto lived in the gardens of the Society, but for this particular specimen there is more hope. The lady who sent it says that the San Diego children make habitual pets of these horned frogs, which are perfectly harmless.

At the famous island of St. Helena, as we learn from the last number of the *Journal of the Linnean Society*, there are found only eighteen species of seaweeds. This is very few for an island ten miles long and seven miles broad. The island of Kerguelen or Land of Desolation, is far more distant from any continent, and yet it has thirty-nine species. Botanists also regard it as remarkable, that while the land vegetation of St. Helena is to a great extent peculiar to the island, there are very few peculiar forms among its seaweeds.

Mr. John L. Norman has brought suit against a Western railroad company for $25,000 damages, alleging that his health was seriously injured for life, while engaged as a mechanic in building a depot for the company at St. Louis, by arsenic and other poisons with which the timber was saturated, to prevent decay.

A curious species of moth from the island of Ceylon has been described by Professor Westwood. It lives and undergoes its transformations under a movable flattened tent constructed by itself from large oval pieces of leaves.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G. A. H. (Binghamton, N. Y.) says: "I have been reading history, and found a passage stating that George Washington was born February 11th, 1732. Now, ever since I can remember, we have always celebrated the 22d of February as the birthday of Washington. I have asked several gentlemen about it, but only one could give me any information on the subject. He says that at one time the day was changed, but that he did not remember the date, or by what authority it was changed, nor why it was changed, and he advised me to go to you and see if you could give me any information on the matter. Now, Mr. Editor, if you can tell me by what authority the change was made, or anything about it, you will greatly oblige me." The statement which you saw was probably based on what is called the *Old* Style of reckoning dates, which makes a difference of eleven days from the New Style. The Old Style follows the Julian manner of computing the months and days, or the calendar established by Julius Cæsar, in which every fourth year consists of 366 days, and the other years of 365 days. This is about eleven minutes in a year too much. Pope Gregory XIII. reformed the calendar by retrenching ten days in October, 1582, in order to bring back the vernal equinox to the same day as at the time of the Council of Nice, A. D. 325. This reformation of the calendar was adopted by act of Parliament in Great Britain in 1751, by which act eleven days in September, 1752, were retrenched, and the third day was reckoned the fourteenth. Reckoning on this basis is called the New Style, and the difference of eleven days between it and the Old Style accounts for the statement which you saw in some old book, that Washington was born on the 11th instead of the 22d day of February, 1732.

BOSTON says: "I am twenty-four years of age. About six years ago I formed the acquaintance of a young lady, to whom I became deeply attached, and within a year from that time we were engaged. Our engagement was broken off, at my request, three years ago, owing to a sudden and unaccountable change of feeling on my part, and apparently greatly to her sorrow. After I had taken the step, and it was too late to retract, I found that my love for her had not diminished, and for the past three years I have felt that I never loved her so much as since I had lost her. Although we are far removed from each other, I hear of her through a friend residing in the same place, and that she never mentions my name, and has removed my pictures from her album. As she never returned me the pictures, letters, or presents I had given her, can I hope that this is a favorable indication, and would you advise me to see her, or write her, and endeavor to regain the place I once held? Or should I do right in asking a mutual friend to try to ascertain her feelings? I have some pride, but would be willing to throw that all aside if I could look forward to a renewal of our engagement. Any advice you can give me through your columns will be thankfully received. I would add that we have never met since our engagement was broken off." Your best course would be to visit the young lady, and frankly tell her the truth, just as you have told it to us. "Truth is mighty, and will prevail," in love as well as in other matters.

E. J. says: "A few days previous to the fourth of July, being one of a party intending to go upon a fishing excursion on that day, I invited a lady acquaintance of mine to accompany me. But not liking to go upon the water, and thinking she could enjoy herself better in some other way, she declined going. The next day I invited two other lady friends of mine—it being understood that each gentleman of the party might invite as many ladies as he chose—both of whom promised to accompany me. On the morning of the Fourth but one of the ladies was ready to go with me; and when I next saw the other, shortly afterward, she told me the reason she did not go was, that she had heard of my inviting the other lady before I did her, and also said that it was something no gentleman would be guilty of—to invite one lady after being refused by another. She also told me that the lady who did go with me, would not have gone had she heard of my inviting any one before her. Now the three ladies are friends of mine, one of whom I esteem just as highly as I do another. Is it such an unpardonable offence to invite one lady on such an occasion, after being refused by another?" No. Even in the important matter of choosing a wife, a man whose offer has been refused by one lady is not debarred from the privilege of offering himself to another, nor is it considered a breach of etiquette for him to do so.

C. M. (Baltimore) says: "The valuable advice you so generously give to the public prompts me to write you for instruction in the following case. I am a mechanic, twenty-three years of age, and have recently been appointed foreman, at a salary of twenty dollars per week. I possess the entire confidence of my employer. I have employment nine months in the year. During the remainder of the year, I wish to devote my time to mental improvement, and, if possible, to acquire perfect knowledge of the English language. Will you please direct me how to proceed in this matter? Would my age and limited knowledge of grammar prevent my admittance to institutes of learning? If so, what course would you recommend?" You can get admission to any school suitable to your case. In addition to attending school three months in the year, it would be well for you to enter upon a course of reading, for spare hours, during the other nine months. Begin with the history of the United States, and by the time you get through with it, other books will have occurred to you.

ONE WHO IS IN TROUBLE, writing from Philadelphia, says: "I am twenty-five years of age, and have been started in business for myself since last January. I am not making enough yet to keep a wife and myself, but expect to be able to do so in the course of a year or two, as mine is a new business which is increasing all the time. Now I wish to know if it would be right for me at this time to ask a young lady to engage herself to me, or should I wait until I am confident I can support her? I am afraid if I do not ask her now, she may think I do not care for her, but am only flirting with her, as a great many young men do now-a-days, and that she may act accordingly by accepting some one else. By answering at as early a date as possible, you will very much oblige me." Your best way would be to state your case, including your present pecuniary condition and your hopes for the future, to the young lady and her parents, and ask her if she is willing to become engaged to you under the circumstances, in case her parents will give their consent.

A. B. (Springfield, Ohio) says: "I have been a reader and admirer of your paper since childhood, and at last take the liberty of asking a question or two, which, if you will answer, I shall be very much obliged. First, is engineering likely to prove a profitable business to a young man who is fond of an out-door life, and not afraid of work? Second, what branches should he become acquainted with before beginning the study of engineering, and how long would it take to learn the business? Please answer, and oblige a well-wisher." Yes; engineering is profitable to those who are expert at it, and are willing to work. Arithmetic Algebra, Geometry, and other mathematical branches are the best preliminary studies for a young man who intends to become an engineer.

ALBERT (Raleigh) asks: "Can a person who is not a born artist, but has a decided taste for drawing and the other fine arts, and who can copy a picture very well with his pencil without ever having had any instruction, learn to be a wood engraver? And also, are wood engravers generally able to find profitable employment in your city? How long would it take a person to learn the art of wood engraving, by placing himself under a good engraver in your city? An early answer will confer a favor on one who has no one else to advise him." You could probably learn to engrave on wood in a few years, if you had a competent instructor and plenty of work. Good wood engravers have no trouble in finding employment.

I. O. S. (Yellow Springs, Ohio) asks: If a gentleman in good social standing sends a note to a lady acquaintance, requesting the pleasure of her company to a social gathering, and she returns no answer, either verbal or written, what inference should be drawn? Is it to be inferred that she accepts or declines the invitation, there being no reason, so far as the gentleman is aware, for its declination? An early answer will greatly oblige me." The most reasonable inference to be drawn in such a case is, that the lady did not receive the note of invitation. It is not to be supposed that a lady who had received such a note would be so impolite as not to acknowledge its reception.

E. T. BUSH (Flemington, N. J.) in reference to statements which have been made, that beech-trees are never struck by lightning, and are, therefore, the safest to have near a house, says: "I write to say that the opinion commonly received, that the beech is never struck by lightning, is erroneous. There is a beech-tree now standing a few miles from this town, which was struck by lightning a few years ago, and which is still badly scarred, furnishing all necessary proof that the impression referred to is a popular error."

IGNORANCE says: "Please tell me, through your Notices to Correspondents, who Danté was, where he was born, and what he did; also, how the name is pronounced." Danté, whose name is pronounced Dan-tay, was one of the greatest poets that ever lived. He was born in Florence, Italy, in the year 1265. When he was only nine years old he fell in love with a beautiful little girl of eight, and that love became the fountain of the poetical inspiration of his life. He died in the year 1321, at the age of fifty-six.

A. S. (Richmond, Ind.) says: "I have organized a string band, and all the members want a different name for it. We cannot agree on any one name, so we will leave it with you, and hope you will give us some names. Please don't disappoint us, as we shall wait until we get the *Ledger*." As a rule, a band is in some way named after its locality; or, if that is not desirable, it takes the name of its organizer or leader. The Richmond String Band would be a good name for you.

C. T. SAWYER (Houston, Texas) says: "I have been a rover for seventeen years, but have read your paper constantly for that length of time. It is not necessary for me to say it is the best paper of the kind published. Public opinion has settled that. Would you kindly state, in your answers to correspondents, whether you can furnish the back numbers of the 'Hidden Hand,' and what they will cost?" Yes, we can furnish the papers, and their cost will be $1 44.

A SOLDIER'S ORPHAN says: "Having seen, in a recent paper, an advertisement for the orphans of soldiers of 1812 to apply for a pension, and being one of that number, I felt that you, sir, would oblige an old subscriber to your valuable paper by informing her, through the *Ledger*, to whom she should write in Washington, to prefer her claim to a pension." Write to the Pension Agent. A letter addressed, Pension Agent, Washington, D. C., would reach him.

ALEXIS (Baltimore) asks: "Is it proper for a man to engage a lady at a party for more than one dance?" It is proper, if the lady chooses to engage herself for more than one. Of course, if a lady dances with one gentleman many times, to the exclusion of all others, it is likely to occasion remark.

M. G. writes: "Will you please inform me, through the columns of the *Ledger*, how the word Baden is pronounced?" It is pronounced *Bay*den, and it is also pronounced *Bah*den. You can take your choice.

A HEART-BROKEN WIFE writes: "I have been a reader of your excellent paper for more than fifteen years, and have never asked your advice before, and I do hope you may think it worthy of an answer. I am in deep distress, as you may know when you read this. I was married at nineteen, and have been married eight years, and have three very dear little children; and when I married, I loved my husband with a love amounting almost to idolatry, because in him I saw only such qualities as anybody would naturally love and esteem; and he in return seemed to love me the same, and tried in every way to gratify my every wish and desire. But in a short time he began to change, and to find fault with me in every thing. My friends did not suit him. I gave them up. My dress and manners he did not like. I changed them, as I thought he would be pleased; but the more I tried, the worse he got. So I gave up trying so much, and he got to being careless and indifferent to me in every way, not noticing me at all when he could avoid it; never, under any circumstances, giving me a kind word. I was really heart-broken, and still I never told a single soul, and I had given up a kind, loving home and dear friends for his sake. He has gone on in this way so long, and is getting gradually worse, and I feel sometimes such an utter loathing and contempt for him, that I think I cannot live with him; and then there will come over me such a feeling of pity and tenderness, that I would do anything to win his love again. I am trying to be a Christian, and I have asked God to help me; but it seems to be getting darker all the time, and I fear my health will give way entirely under it, for I have all the care and trouble of the children, as he cares nothing for them or his home either, more than to give us the barest necessities of life. Now can you give me any advice? I am so distressed, I fear my mind may give way, and oh, I want to live for my children." The last sentence of your own letter suggests the only advice which we can give you. You say you wish to live for your children. Live for them, and let that be your consolation in your great trial—your living death, we might not inappropriately, call it. And yet, if your husband is not wholly insensible to endearments, continued cheerful devotion to him—however undeserving he may be—may, in time, reawaken his better nature.

W. V. (Harpswell) says: "I am going to take Mr. Beecher's advice, and state my business first, and then, if necessary, add a few embellishments. I am a boy seventeen years old, and have, perhaps, a fair common-school education. I have also taken up the study of Latin. Do you think that, without a teacher, I could ever be classed among the average writers of the day, if I were to write and study daily, and bring all my forces to bear upon the accomplishment of this one particular point? And could I, by study, acquire knowledge sufficient to publish a newspaper? Please answer these questions, and advise me as to what books I should study or read. I believe that a person can, by concentrating his whole mind upon it, do *anything* that has ever been done by mortal man. But as I am apt to be mistaken, I would like your advice upon the subject." You are exceedingly mistaken in your belief as to what a person can do. A puny, sickly man could not become a Samson or a Hercules, however much he might concentrate his mind upon it. A man with less than an average share of brains could not become a Cæsar, a Newton, a Franklin, or a Webster, no matter how hard and long he might struggle to achieve such a distinction. Persistent culture, wisely carried on, will enable one to make all that *can* be made out of his natural abilities, and that is all that it will enable him to do. You could doubtless acquire knowledge enough to publish a newspaper, if you would get a situation in some newspaper establishment, and learn by experience. But you can no more learn how to publish a newspaper by studying books, than a man can learn how to build ships by going through college.

DISTRESS asks: "Could the following, under any circumstances, be considered a legal marriage in the State of New York? A gentleman and lady agree to marry themselves, and accordingly the following form is drawn up: 'I, John Doe, do take thee, Mary Roe, to be my married wife; and do, in the presence of God, promise and covenant to be a loving and faithful husband unto thee until God shall separate us by death.—John Doe.' 'I, Mary Roe, do take thee, John Doe, to be my married husband; and I do, in the presence of God, promise and covenant to be a loving and faithful wife unto thee until God shall separate us by death.—Mary Roe.' 'This is to certify that we have made the above promises and vows of our own free will, and we do hereby pledge ourselves, by all we hold sacred, to consider them as binding upon us, and that we are as truly married now as we will be when the minister of God shall, in the presence of many, pronounce us husband and wife; and we do further pledge ourselves to be publicly married according to the laws of the State of New York, some time in the month of June, 1872.—John Doe, Mary Roe Doe.'" The writer of the above informs us that the male party to the agreement now repudiates it, and refuses to be bound by it, and hence the inquiry as to its legal effect. The parties having lived together as man and wife, the marriage is valid and binding on them. This question has been repeatedly decided in the courts of this State, and no man is permitted thus to impose upon a woman, under the form of marriage, and afterward repudiate his solemn covenant.

E. E. K. says: Being of the opinion that your answers to correspondents are perfectly impartial and based upon sound views of the matter under consideration, I think I can rely upon you for a definite answer to what I wish to know. Many opportunities are afforded me of holding arguments upon various topics with my shopmates. Quite recently an argument arose regarding the impeachment of Andrew Johnson, President of the United States. Several of us contended that he was actually impeached, which was disputed by our opponents, on the ground that a person was not impeached until he was convicted of the crime or crimes of which he was accused. Webster was called into requisition, and although he decided against the negative they would not give in. So the matter is now referred to you for final decision." You and those who agree with you are right. To impeach any one is to *accuse* him of some offence; to *try* him for the offence of which he has been accused, is quite another matter. An impeachment is analogous to an indictment—is fact, it is an indictment. A man may be indicted for murder, and yet be acquitted when he comes to trial. So a public officer may be impeached for official malfeasance, and yet be acquitted, as President Johnson was. The acquittal, however, does not wipe out the fact of the impeachment, any more than the acquittal of a man on trial for murder would wipe out the fact of his indictment.

SORROWFUL writes: "I am a female physician; have been practising in ——; have a good practice, and many friends among my patients. I have one family with whom I have been on the most intimate terms, especially with the lady of the house, who loved and trusted me as a sister; but lately, through the cruelty of a lady friend of hers, whom I accidentally made an enemy, she has become influenced against me, and is now jealous of me, and thinks I am in love with her husband. Hence, my kindness to them in sickness, etc., has been construed into the basest meanness, as she has been made to believe I did it all from love to her husband. You know how impossible it is to convince a wife, when she has once made up her mind to such a thing. God knows I am as innocent as the angels of this charge, or of ever, under any circumstances, going between husband and wife. But this falsehood, besides almost breaking my heart at the loss of her good opinion and the friendship of the family, is likely to injure me very much, and having nothing but my reputation and practice to live on, I scarcely know what to do. What is my duty? To sacrifice all, and leave this place, or remain and brave it out? Truth does not always prevail, nor right triumph." Attend strictly to your business; get a good husband of your own, and thus put an end to the scandal.

A KANSAS LADY writes: "I am a young lady, eighteen years of age. I have been engaged to a young man about three months, but now I see that I could not be happy with him; not that I have anything against him, but I don't love him. And last week I told him my feelings, and asked to be released from my engagement. He felt very sorry, and asked me, as a friend, to let him have my picture. I gave it to him on the impulse of the moment, and without considering whether it was proper to do so. Now what I would like to know is, did I do right? and if not, what shall I do? I must say the young man is a gentleman in every sense of the word, and he promised me that he would not make any bad use of it, nor show it to any one. Please answer this at your convenience." We do not think your picture will hurt the young man, and we cannot see how he can hurt it. And, furthermore, we must say that you have no cause to complain if he, who had been solemnly promised the substance, consents to take up with the shadow.

PORTLAND writes: "I have for some time past passionately loved a young lady, but never dared avow my passion, first, because she has another suitor, and again, dreading she might disregard my passion and tell others, thereby making me an object of ridicule. My situation at present is really a miserable one. Should you be so kind as to render me a little advice to see my way clearer, you would very much oblige me." You ought to be able to judge by the lady's manner, whether she prefers you to your rival or not. But if you cannot determine by that, why, ask her, and she will tell you. You can rely on the information thus obtained.

B. M. (St. Joseph, Mo.) writes: "Please be so kind as to inform me what the entire charges are to graduate at Yale or Harvard college, and if any inducements are given to boys without parents." We are informed that some young men get along at the colleges mentioned on six hundred dollars a year, which, for the four years comprised in the course, would make two thousand and four hundred dollars. No inducements are held out to any one class of boys that are not held out to all classes.

SNOWDROP asks: "When a lady becomes engaged for the second time, what should be done with the first engagement ring, before receiving the second?" As an engagement ring is worn on the first finger of the left hand, and as it would be awkward to wear two engagement rings on the same finger at the same time, the first one should be removed before the second is put on.

MADGE says "she is in love with a man twice as old as herself. He *looks* his love for her, but never *speaks* it. She wishes to know what she shall do?" Our answer is, do nothing; and wait until you are as old as he is, at least, before you ever speak of love to a man who has never spoken of it to you.

MAUDE AND DAISIE make the following request: "Please tell us how to attract a young man's attention, and having attracted it, how to keep it." Cultivate your minds and your manners by every means within your reach. Deserve everybody's regard, and you will be pretty sure to receive some one's.

DIAMOND asks: "Is it a breach of politeness for a lady not to invite a gentleman in after he has escorted her home from church?" Perhaps not, exactly; but it would be a breach of self-respect on his part, ever to escort her home again, if she didn't.

P. H. (Battle Creek, Mich.) asks: "What will kill, destroy, or drive away roaches, or cockroaches?" Hot water.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*